

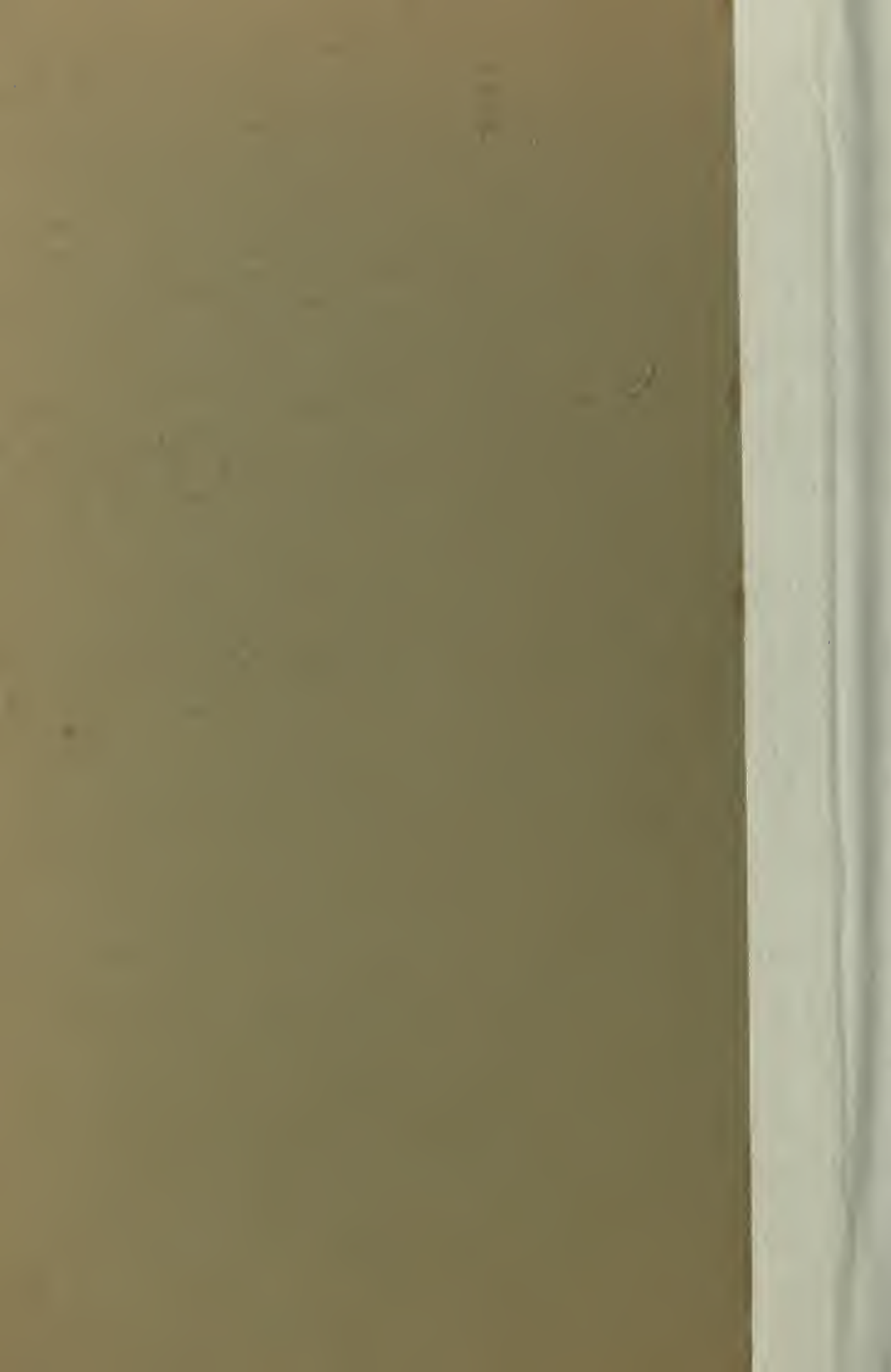


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*POOR RELIEF
IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES
and
OUT-DOOR RELIEF IN ENGLAND*

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LOUISA TWINING





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POOR RELIEF
IN
FOREIGN COUNTRIES,
AND
Out-Door Relief in England.

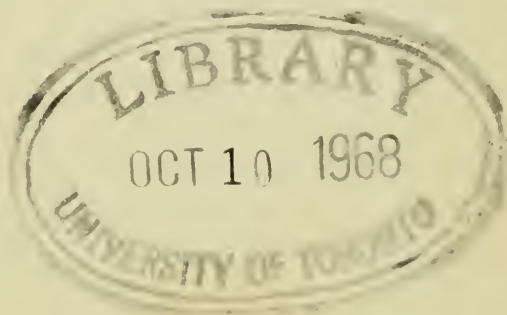
BY
LOUISA TWINING,
GUARDIAN OF THE POOR AT KENSINGTON.



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"PAUPERISM IS THE GENERAL LEAKAGE THROUGH EVERY
JOINT OF THE SHIP THAT IS ROTTEN."—*Carlyle*.



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P R E F A C E.

THE lack of interest in the administration of the Poor Law in all its branches can hardly fail to strike every one who thinks upon the matter. The outside public may be said to know and care nothing about it, scarcely concerning themselves even about the election of their representatives—the Guardians. As to the merits of this or that method of carrying out the Poor Law, either in the past or the present, there are few, indeed, who care to inform themselves on these questions, which deserve to be seriously and deeply considered. The “qualification” of Guardians, other than that connected with property, has never been defined nor understood ; but a profound interest in and knowledge of social problems and difficulties can hardly be said to be generally considered essential. Our insularity may possibly excuse us from making ourselves acquainted with other plans and systems pursued abroad—in European countries, and in our own colonies ; but such knowledge would be of great value and importance in dealing with similar matters at home. Not only is little effort made to acquire the benefit of the wider experience of other countries, but most of us are ignorant of what is done in our own country, even in our own Metropolis, for there is no intercourse or exchange of ideas between one Board of Guardians and another, and practice is hopelessly various even within a limited area. Hardly any opportunities exist of discussion or comparison of either theories or practice, and each goes on in its own familiar groove, and with its own accustomed policy, varied it may be, or upset, by the election

of a new Board, which may perchance know either more or less than its predecessor.* Under these circumstances anything like uniformity of administration must be impossible, the widest differences of opinion existing even on the old question of out-relief, which may be said to have been the one chief cause and reason for the introduction of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.

Having had occasion to look through the Blue Book containing the report which preceded the passing of that Act, I could not fail to be struck with the wide divergence of many of the opinions (based upon serious and indisputable facts) set forth by the Commissioners from those expressed in recent discussions on the introduction of the new Local Government Bill. As the study of Blue Books is not attractive, and perhaps hardly possible to many, even of those who may desire information and enlightenment, it occurred to me that it might be useful if a few extracts were presented in a more accessible form to general readers, not only on the subject of out-relief at home, but concerning the methods adopted in foreign countries also. To many women Guardians, now coming forward in increasing numbers to share in the duties of a wise and careful administration of the Poor Law, I venture to think this little volume may be a not unwelcome addition to their library, and with this hope I send it forth. The subjects of which it treats are vast, and important to all classes of the community; and if it helps, in even a small degree, to enlighten the darkness and ignorance and indifference that prevail concerning them, I shall have my reward; and I earnestly trust that it may fall into the hands of working men, as well as the more educated classes, for it is most important that *they* should be able to comprehend the merits of the case as concerns out-door relief, and the dangers

* The annual conferences held in the provincial districts enable Guardians in the country to give and gain information and experience from each other; but in London, with its thirty centres of administration, there is but the annual conference, at which, perhaps, two subjects are discussed.

that beset its extension—a danger that threatens their own position and independence, as well as the comfort and well-being of the poorer ratepayers, whose claims for consideration are too often wholly overlooked.

In the exercise of my duties as Guardian I have rarely met with an intelligent comprehension of the subject of out-relief amongst the ratepayers outside, who seem to consider that a kind of partnership is desirable between private charity and the Poor Law, and that *our* doles are intended to supplement the meagre gifts of Christian donors, which are limited accordingly ; and the more deserving and aged are the applicants, the more strongly is their claim pressed upon us. But, surely, these are the very reasons that should restrain us from making such persons paupers in their old age, during the few years they may have to live, and through which they should be helped by the voluntary charity of their neighbours ; and it would be so, were there not the bottomless purse of the rates to fall back upon. In this large and rich parish I have been frequently asked by astonished and kind-hearted persons if I do not approve of outdoor relief, reasons or principles either for or against it never having occurred to them ; while the actual administration is far too much in the power of individuals who may happen to be in office, and who may be, in varying numbers and by frequent changes of election, swayed about by every wind of doctrine and feeling. The recent suggestion made in the report of the Lords' Committee—that some system of bye-laws should be adopted by Boards of Guardians, to remain in force until rescinded, seems well worthy of consideration, as giving greater stability to principles and decisions which are too often at present at the mercy of frequently-changing bodies, and depend upon the votes of a narrow majority.* A wider acquaintance

* "In order to preserve continuity in the system of administration, it would, we think, be desirable that Boards of Guardians should have the power to make bye-laws regulating their procedure, which, when confirmed by the Local Government Board, should be binding on the Guardians until altered by the same authority." (Report of Lords' Committee.)

with the facts and principles of Poor Law administration, both past and present, is earnestly to be desired, not only on the part of all who become the recognised Guardians of the poor, but of those also who, as ratepayers and electors, are at least partly responsible for carrying out wisely, economically, and humanely, the laws which have been handed down to us.

It has been well said recently by Professor H. Sidgwick, "There are many signs that the increasing power which the growth of democracy places in the hands of manual labourers is not unlikely to be used in the direction of diminishing the deterrent character of our Poor Law administration."

L. T.

December, 1888.

POOR RELIEF

IN

FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

It is thirteen years since a Blue Book of nearly 500 pages was issued on the subject of "Poor Laws in Foreign Countries." It was stated to contain the substance of the most valuable series of reports relating to these matters that had been collected since the publication of similar reports by the Poor Law Commissioners in 1834.

It is probable that only a very limited number of those who might be interested in the subject made themselves acquainted with the facts recorded in this large volume; and yet, when we consider the importance of the questions involved in this study with regard to the administration of our own Poor Law, we cannot but think it desirable that the large number of guardians and other persons who are concerned in this work throughout the country should have ready opportunities of studying the subject from every point of view. We shall endeavour, therefore, in the following pages to give a brief statement of the methods of relief adopted in every country where such plans, or any approaching them in character, are being carried out, such statements being taken from the Blue Book to which we have referred.

It is often vaguely stated that a regular system of Poor Laws belongs peculiarly to England, especially with regard to workhouses, but this will be found on inquiry not to be the case. Varieties of laws, plans, and administration, exist in every country, and a consideration and comparison of them all may possibly lead to a wiser judgment concerning our own methods

at home, where our insularity is sometimes said to foster prejudices and narrowness of conception.

The reign of Elizabeth is considered by many as the starting-point for a discussion or history of the Poor Law, while by others a far more distant date is assumed; but though the germs of such a law may be discerned even in the remote times of our early Saxon forefathers, no actual law for the relief of destitution can be traced before the reign of Richard II. Statutes with the object of restriction, and even of extirpation, of pauperism, appear to have existed as the origin of Poor Laws, taking the form of enactments against mendicancy, but to these we need not refer at greater length except to say that the fact of their harsh and repressive character rendered necessary the relief of destitution by some form of Poor Laws in nearly all European countries.

Another belief which has become general is that England is distinguished from other countries by the principle of acknowledging a "right" for every person to be supported or relieved by the public; but the accuracy of this statement is denied by an author in the Blue Book to which we are referring. It is there stated that the applicant for relief cannot claim it as a "right," or enforce it by law, and thus it cannot be a "legal" right. We fear that the "obligation" to relieve will hardly be distinguishable, except in terms. And that it is not easy to enforce the distinction is confessed in the following words, which we quote:—"We know, in fact, that under our system a right is assumed to exist, is peremptorily asserted by the applicant, and is tacitly recognised by the administrator." This claim of right it is which has been resisted by foreign countries, and, we believe, with good reason.

We will now proceed with our examination as to the state of matters with regard to the relief of the poor in other countries, giving at the outset the classification stated to be "convenient" in the Blue Book:—

1. Of countries in which there exists a special tax for the relief of pauperism.
2. In which voluntary contributions are assisted by grants from local administration, or from the State.
3. In which the relief of the poor is left altogether to voluntary agency.

This may be considered a general classification; but, never-

theless, great differences exist even in administering these systems.

In Europe there are only two countries which adopt the plan of relief by a special tax levied for the purpose—viz., England and Denmark; and only three—Prussia, Denmark, and Sweden—in which the “right” of every destitute person to be supported by the State is declared.

This “right” in *Denmark* was asserted as long ago as 1683, and confirmed in 1866. The machinery of administration resembles in many respects that of England, but it has never been connected with any religious organisation, or exclusively in the hands of the Church. The system being so closely allied to our own, it will be interesting to note the opinion as to its operation given in 1833, at a time when our own Poor Law was about to come under the scrutiny of public opinion and subsequent reform:—

“The dread of poverty is diminished, and he who is half-poor works less instead of more, so that he speedily becomes a complete pauper. Those who are young and capable of labour are less economical, always having the Poor Rate in view as a resource against want; likewise marriages are contracted with much less forethought or consideration as to consequences. The morality of the poor man suffers, for he looks upon his provision as a right, for which he therefore need not be thankful. And the morality of the rich man suffers, for the natural moral relation between him and the poor man has become completely severed; there is no place left for the exercise of his benevolence; being obliged to give, he gives with reluctance; and thus is the highest principle of charitable action, Christian love, exposed to great danger of destruction.”

In the year 1887 some changes were effected in Denmark, similar to those made in England in 1834.

The workhouses, or poor-houses, resembled the old parish workhouses in England. Great laxity prevailed; relief in sickness was so easily obtained that those well able to provide themselves with medical aid received it gratuitously. Casual winter help, and allowances for rent, brought the usual demoralising results, and repressed the growth of provident habits and independence amongst the labouring classes. The same medical officer who makes these remarks urges the gross abuse of the workhouse system, and the absolute necessity for

adopting "a regular discipline, *the prohibition of the inmates 'ad libitum' coming and going*, and the stoppage of the use of certain luxuries, as tobacco and brandy."

The recommendations of the Danish Commission are well worthy of our notice and earnest attention, for they apply to England as well as to every other country in which legal systems of relief are adopted. It suggests "the complete separation, by legislative enactment, of public and private charitable functions; *the literal restriction of public relief to such individuals as are actually unable to work—that is to say, to children, aged, and weak persons*; a large development to be given to the workhouse system; outdoor relief to be sparingly allowed; no charity to be dispensed to the recipients of public relief; investigation of cases to be personal and severe; money to be given in exceptional cases only."

Up to the adoption of these recommendations, it may be interesting to observe that "there was as little care under the Danish law to protect society from the consequences of giving to every destitute person a legal right to subsistence as prevailed in our own administration anterior to 1834;" and surely it confirms the justice of our own course, by proving that the same laws and laxity will produce the same fatal and objectionable results in different nations, and under different circumstances.

We now come to the Poor Law system of *Sweden*, which is said to be "as full of interest and instruction as that of any other country in Europe"—partly, we conclude, for the reason that it is the earliest known system of Poor Law in Christendom, being contained in the oldest Icelandic law-book, before the introduction of Christianity, and it remained in close connection with the religion of the State. Public laws were framed in the fifteenth century, and in 1571 the foundation of public poor relief was laid by a Church ordinance. But, notwithstanding these efforts, in 1620 the unsatisfactory state of the system was perceived by Gustavus Adolphus, and suggestions were made to prevent the abuses which had grown up. It was not, however, till after the French Revolution that the subject was dealt with thoroughly in 1809, and only in 1853 was the order carried out which is now in force—that distress arising from incapacity for work, mental imbecility, or sickness, has the first claim to public support, and children to maintenance

and education. The cost is supplied from voluntary sources, supplemented, if necessary, by a tax, and the management is given by Parochial Committees. In 1871 a Poor Law Amendment Act was passed, the objects of which were very much the same as those of 1834 in England, and were designed to remedy the same evils. We cannot refrain from quoting part of a report written in 1833 on this subject. The writer, an Englishman, states : "The Swedish artisan is neither so industrious nor so frugal as formerly. He has heard that the destitute able-bodied are in England supported by the parish ; he claims similar relief, and alleges his expectation of it as an excuse for prodigality or indifference to saving. . . . Formerly each family sustained its destitute and impotent, and would have deemed it a shame to receive support from others."

But the conditions upon which relief is given under the Swedish law of 1871 appear to be more stringent than elsewhere in Europe, relief to the able-bodied being prohibited, and the Board possessing the "right of mastership" over all persons who, through idleness or indifference, shall allow any members of their family to become chargeable, and over the parent of any child that may be arrested for begging. The Board of Guardians, and their functions, are constituted nearly the same as in England, the place of the Local Government Board being taken by "His Majesty's Governor," considerable latitude being allowed, yet within strictly-defined limits. It may be said that the Swedish Poor Law aims at the prevention of pauperism rather than its suppression, and this endeavour is shared by many other European countries in which relief in kind is the rule, and in money the exception, while the contrary prevails in England.

Unions of parishes were formed by the Orders of 1871, and each such Union may determine its relief in the manner best adapted to its locality ; and it is ordered that every Poor Union should establish houses of labour for those who are under its guardianship. In the year 1865 the number of the outdoor largely exceeded that of the indoor poor.

Norway.

In the year 1829 two Bills for the relief of the poor were framed ; but it was only in 1845 that a law was passed organising public relief, and giving to every person, in case of

destitution, a legal claim to relief in the place where he was born, or had lived for three years between his fifteenth and sixty-third birthdays. In the towns power was given to place able-bodied persons in workhouses; but in the country the system of "out-quartering" of adults, or, as we should say, "boarding-out," was adopted, which has always prevailed in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway; and not only there, but it was known also in the Orkneys and Shetland Islands, in Livonia, in Berne and Fribourg, and in parts of Southern Germany, as late as forty years ago. This plan prevailed also for children, who were put under the care of schoolmasters, and not with cottagers, as with us.

Again, we have evidence as to the results of "giving the poor a legal claim to relief, and making it consequently the duty of the wealthier classes to pay regular imposts." The law of 1845, we are told, "increased the burden of the latter, whilst the motives to self-dependence in the former were weakened." In 1863, therefore, the Government totally changed the system. The "right" to relief was restricted to orphans and persons of unsound mind. The relief even of the sick and aged ceased to be obligatory, and able-bodied men were to be relieved only upon the Poor Commissioners being satisfied that the cases were of urgent necessity. Besides this change, the power of control over the public funds was limited, and rates could no longer be levied at pleasure.

The system of boarding-out paupers is still adhered to, and preferred by the peasantry to a tax in money. Yet we can hardly wonder at the remark of a native writer, that "many are the complaints against indolent and impertinent guests"!

There is a very minute subdivision of administrative authority exercised in Norway. The 651 districts are still further subdivided into as many subdivisions as there are members on the Commission; and this is in order to obtain a complete inspection or supervision over all the applicants for relief—a system that prevails at Elberfeld, and which has been made known and discussed in England. The administration of relief in each district is entrusted to a Commission, four inspectors being attached to each, assisted by seven or eight members, acting under a president. Medical advice, as well as medicine, is given to outdoor poor, whether they receive regular parochial relief or not.

The classes of persons to be relieved were divided into three by the law of 1863—viz., (1) idiots and orphans under fifteen years shall receive the necessary assistance, and children also instruction; (2) the aged, sick, and cripples, receive assistance when the Committee deem it necessary; but (3) able and healthy people shall not usually receive assistance. Yet it is left to the Committee, in case of need, to assist such persons, specially with a view to prevent their becoming absolute paupers.

North Germany.

We now pass to the Poor Law system in North Germany, where no definite legislation had been attempted up to the beginning of the last century, though by a law of 1577 "communes" were bound to support their own poor, to provide hospitals, and to send away strangers, each county establishing a relief system of its own. The Poor Rate was also raised in various ways, and from different sources, and the councils varied in like manner as to election and power.

In 1871 a law was passed which enacts that "every German, in case of distress, has a *right* to demand of his commune a roof, the absolute necessities of life, medical attendance in case of illness, and in case of death a suitable burial." Relief may be granted by admission to a poor-house or hospital, or by allotting work proportioned to the strength of the pauper, either in such an institution or out of it. Poor relief institutions are not obliged to pay for any spiritual attendance upon paupers.

There is no uniformity in the mode in which relief is given, discretion being left to the various States; but, as a rule, outdoor relief is bestowed.

The systems of Hamburg and Elberfeld have attracted considerable attention in this country, the great increase of pauperism in Germany at the beginning of the century having compelled an investigation into the causes. The distinguishing characteristic of these systems is strictness and a minute investigation of cases, which, it was alleged, could be ascertained without a workhouse test. In Hamburg these duties were, as now at Leipzig, undertaken by 180 gentlemen, and the result of their labours was most successful; but the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of persons able

and willing to conduct such laborious yet unpaid work must always be considerable ; and a strict system of control is absolutely essential, to escape imposition, which, after all, cannot be entirely avoided. The investigations and inquiries are necessarily of the strictest and most inquisitorial nature, such as in England would hardly be tolerated ; but if the work-house test is dispensed with, this is the only alternative. It is, however, discredited in many foreign countries because "it is calculated to destroy the sense of family ties which the system of outdoor relief preserves."

We have a report of the system adopted in Hamburg as early as 1788, by a gentleman who had resided in England. He states that, some years previously the evils of pauperism having become intolerable, the existing means for the relief of the poor were consolidated under one management, and a new system of administration was introduced. Many wealthy citizens volunteered for the duty of Overseers. We quote one of their rules :—"Actual relief was the first object, for we were all convinced of the barbarity of preventing beggary when provision for real want was not previously prepared ; but at the moment this provision was secured, measures were taken to prevent any man from receiving a shilling which he was able to earn for himself." It was further stated that "it was our determined principle to reduce this support lower than what any industrious man or woman in such circumstances could earn ; for if the manner in which relief is given is not a spur to industry, it becomes undoubtedly a premium to sloth and profligacy." Spinning flax was the industry chiefly employed. Provision for the medical relief of the sick was also made, and for the assistance of women with large families.

It appears that the present system of relief in Hamburg is based on the organisation here described ; but it must be remarked that these plans were carried out by means of voluntary contributions, and not by any general tax, respectable inhabitants even collecting in person ; there was thus no sharp line between public and private charity, which exists in larger communities. It cannot be said, therefore, that there is a legal provision for the relief of the poor, as in our English Poor Law ; there is neither a legal obligation to contribute, nor a legal claim to assistance by the destitute. Before the Reformation, the administration of charity devolved upon the Romish

clergy, but afterwards the plan of parochial relief was adopted. As early as 1529 directions for the Overseers were published, enjoining them "to visit the houses in their respective districts once every month, in order to make themselves acquainted with the circumstances of the poor ; to provide employment for those who were able to work ; to lend money without interest to those who were honest, and could with a little assistance maintain an independent position ; and, lastly, to grant permanent relief to the disabled and sick." These ideal plans were, however, found, after a lapse of time, to be impossible in execution, and the usual laxity brought about the usual results, and the reform of which we have spoken, at the end of the last century, was enacted. The doctors, apothecaries, nurses, and messengers, are the only paid persons. Out-relief is given to a far greater extent than indoor, the number of persons receiving the former varying between 4,000 and 5,000, while the inmates of the workhouse, or permanent paupers, were only about 1,300.

Grants from the public treasury supplemented the contributions formerly given by individuals, but, as might be expected, when it was found that public funds could supply the deficiencies, the former fell off, and have now ceased to be given.

Six classes of persons are excluded from relief, and though there is no legal obligation to support poor relations, it is quite exceptional to give help to such persons.

The principle of the settlement of paupers has been uniform throughout Germany since 1878, and it is as follows :— "Every German in distress must be temporarily relieved by the State or town in which he finds himself. Should he not be entitled to a settlement in the State or town where he is living at the time, which settlement is acquired either by a continuous residence for two years after the completion of his twenty-fourth year, by marriage, or by descent, the local authorities have a claim upon the locality to which he legally belongs for the reimbursement of the expenses that have been incurred for his relief." The following statement may be of interest to us at the present time :—

"Foreigners who become destitute are relieved as native paupers, but the number of such persons is exceedingly small, the legislation of Germany in general, and of Hamburg

in particular, having had the effect of checking the settlement of people possessing no visible means of support."

The practical working of the system described is said to be good, being mainly of a voluntary character, and depending largely on the amount of time and attention bestowed upon it. In these respects it is hardly possible to compare it with our English administration; but we will conclude the review of the German system in general with the following suggestive remarks:—

"There is not in Germany that readiness to regard workhouse relief as the inevitable accompaniment of hard times or advanced life as is too often the case at home. Frugality, temperance, and foresight, are general characteristics of the German people; and savings banks, sick and burial clubs, and other forms of provision for old age and distress, are taken advantage of by a large section of the population, even where their means are so low as to render saving a matter of great difficulty." It is hardly necessary to add that *Hamburg* abounds in charitable institutions and associations for the relief of distress, which amply supplement the public organisation; and we are told that "the condition of the poorer classes contrasts favourably with that of the same section of the population in many other towns and countries in Europe."

We will now give a few more particulars as to the Elberfeld system, much talked of, but perhaps little understood. It was adopted in 1853, before which time the number of persons relieved was 8 per cent. of the population, but in four years from that time it had decreased to 2·9 per cent. By a decree of 1823, in the province of Düsseldorf, the municipalities were made the legal authority for poor relief, and down to 1850 the system was based upon French legislation, through Bureaux de Bienfaisance; but in that year Elberfeld established a local system of legislation, the town was divided into sixty districts, a visitor being appointed for each, the number being shortly found to be too few. Pauperism consequently increased in the two following years, and an entire revision of the system was undertaken, an attempt having been previously made to allow each religious community to take charge of its own members. This plan, adopted by only one such communion, proved a complete failure, the

result being that its pauperism exceeded that of the rest of the town by about 30 per cent.

As we have said before, the essential feature of this system is the strict and personal investigation which is carried out by the Overseers and inspectors who are entrusted with the duties of visiting and relief. These offices are unpaid and compulsory. The Overseers number 18, the visitors 252, and they meet once a fortnight, when all applications are reported, as well as the amounts of relief given. It will be seen that there is no corresponding body in our Poor Law, each visitor having a district with not more than four cases to investigate.

The legal obligation of supporting relations is much wider and more extended than with us, and is far more rigidly enforced, and the administrators endeavour to keep the relief from charity and the Poor Law wholly distinct, though practically this is not always carried out. Medical relief is given to all who apply with an order from the visitor ; but indoor relief, as in our workhouses, does not form part of the Elberfeld system, the poor-house being more like an almshouse ; besides this, there is the hospital and the orphanage, but none of these resemble their English counterparts. The poorhouse contains about 180 aged and infirm persons, while those who are capable of earning anything go out to work ; they enjoy more freedom than is allowed to our inmates, and are happy and contented ; sick paupers are sent to the general hospital, and in one year they formed nearly half the number of patients. The orphanage receives all orphan and deserted children, amounting in one year to 114 ; the cost of maintenance is about half that in our district schools, and the children are said to turn out well in after-life. Applicants for out-relief are alone admitted to these institutions ; the workhouse test, as we understand it, does not exist in Elberfeld, the searching inquisition taking its place. Anyhow, the result of their system is that there is no able-bodied pauperism in the town and district, and it is considered that it has had a marked effect upon the habits of the people as regards thrift and providence.

It may be interesting to add a few particulars concerning the methods of relief adopted at *Berlin* at the present time and since 1870-1.

The year 1693 seems to have been the first period when a

Commission was named to administer relief in the city; persons being sick or poor were invited to come twice a week to the town hall, and funds were collected every week from house to house. In 1820 this system was altered, the charge of the poor being thrown on the Commune, and the workhouse and three hospitals were made over to it. The Committee consisted of thirty-two persons, who were all unpaid up to the year 1853, when four paid officers were added, owing to the usual and well-known difficulties of volunteer work; in addition, there are 116 Sub-Committees, each taking charge of a special portion of the town, varying in numbers. One of the duties of these persons is to ascertain, on the death of a pauper, if he has left any property, however small; for, according to German legislation, relief is always looked upon in the light of a loan, to be afterwards recovered, if possible, from himself or his relations; but if wives or children are left, a share only is obtained. Nevertheless, in one year the sums so inherited amounted to £437. Admittance to workhouse or hospitals is exceptional, relief being given in money or kind.

The difference between the workhouse of Germany and England is worthy of remark. The name is precisely the same, but it is not so much an institution for the relief of the destitute as a house of correction, being used by the police, who send to it vagrants, tramps, or drunkards. Those to whom outdoor relief cannot be given are thus the chief inmates, but a portion is also set apart for the families of working men unable to find lodgings; in 1872 there were sixty-two such families found there, remaining probably for six months. Work is the rule and custom in this house, the earnings of the able-bodied in various ways amounting to a large sum, which not only repays the cost of their maintenance, but allows a sum to be given to them on discharge; this, however, is found to be too often, as elsewhere, immediately consumed in drink.

Orphan and destitute children are either sent to the orphan asylum, or, more usually, put out to nurse. There are 100 Sub-Committees for this part of the work of relief.

Before concluding, we may add that pauperism is increasing in Berlin; and a growing difficulty is found in obtaining the necessary supply of persons who are willing and able to control the administration of the extensive system of out-relief.

Bavaria.

The system of Poor Relief dates, in all its more important features, from the year 1816, and is continued to the present time, even after the changes made in 1870; but it may be traced back, as in other parts of Germany, to the year 1497, and to laws framed by the Diet. "Legal provision is so far obligatory that a complete system of relief is organised by law throughout the country, and paupers are in certain cases enabled to appeal to the Government authority to compel relieving officers to do their duty. No pauper can, however, prefer a claim at law for public relief; and the form in which it is to be given is left entirely to the discretion of the Poor Law authorities. The two objects named for which public relief was instituted are—(1) to afford relief to necessitous persons; (2) to endeavour to prevent their becoming complete paupers. But it can only be given to persons in absolute want of the means of sustaining life and health, and by whom relief is not obtainable by relations legally bound to support them, or from public charities. Certain labour must also be performed, either in or out of a workhouse. Funds are obtained from various sources, and in case of need by a special tax. An association for the voluntary relief of the poor is in close connection with the system of public relief.

Workhouses exist only for beggars and vagrants, and schools for children belonging to them.

But, though the laws may be traced back for nearly four centuries, various changes have been made; and in 1780 a new principle was introduced—that the Commune should maintain its own poor, and that such aid should supersede begging, a State fund being established to assist the local districts.

In 1869 it was still further enforced that "public relief shall only supply what cannot be procured from voluntary sources, and is therefore only subsidiary."

Austria.

The principle is affirmed that relief must be granted to those born within the district; but it is only given where private charity is insufficient, and where there are no others

to support the poor. The funds are provided by voluntary subscriptions, endowments, and taxes. In country Communes, where there are no establishments for the reception of paupers, the poor and infirm are boarded out with householders, as we have seen is the case in Norway. The sick are admitted to hospitals (which are under State supervision) by payment from the local authorities. Children are taken into orphan asylums, or are admitted free into schools, and even into educational institutions for the higher classes. The administration is entirely carried out by elected representatives of the commune.

The system was founded by the Emperor Joseph II. in 1782, and the "Poor Institute" was established in connection with other already existing institutions, and was intended to relieve such as could not be received into them.

Belgium.

There is no Poor Rate, though a legal provision for the poor consists of donations of the public, vested in and administered by civil authorities, funds being occasionally added by the Commune, the Province, and the State, if necessary.

In 1796 the burden of relief was thrown upon private charity, and Bureaux and Hospices were formed, each having their own revenues, derived from different sources. But the pauper's first claim is on several degrees of relations, amounting to six in number; if these claims fail, then the Bureau is applied to for relief. This corresponds to our Relief Committees. The administration of both these institutions is by unpaid members appointed by the Common Council.

In 1847 pauperism amounted to 17 per cent. of the population, and even in the year 1868 it was 11 per cent. The following words are true of other countries besides Belgium:—"A working man once inscribed on the list seldom rises again to independence. He accepts this species of tutelage at first from necessity, then from habit. Every public calamity swells these lists materially; abundance and prosperity have little or no effect in reducing them. . . . It is found that in every instance pauperism increases in proportion to the funds provided for its relief, and that the richest Provinces are those which have the largest number of paupers. . . . The Pro-

vince of Luxembourg has next to no revenue for the poor, yet no complaints of death and distress ever come from that quarter."

As the public institutions of Belgium are mostly belonging to the State, there is no difficulty in placing sick and infirm paupers in them at the expense of their own Communes. There are, besides, Hospices or small farms, where the infirm and children are received on condition of partially earning their living, such being no longer boarded out, as formerly, in families.

Three causes are assigned for the prevalence of pauperism in Belgium :—

1. The excessive density of the population, this feature being more marked there than elsewhere in Europe.

2. The great amount of assistance and alms provided by public and private charity, which has attracted and multiplied the candidates for it beyond all bounds.

3. The vice of intemperance, which is probably not only the first cause of pauperism, but the source also of crime, disease, and insanity, and it seems to be increasing.

England and Belgium have both a heavy burden of pauperism, but each deals with it in a different manner. Here it is thrown entirely on the taxpayers, and it is more than double the cost in Belgium, where only a portion falls upon them.

The Netherlands.

We find, as usual, that during the Middle Ages the care and relief of the poor fell upon the clergy and the monastic houses ; but there was no regular system of relief till the fourteenth century, when houses were established for the sick and orphans, other poor persons being relieved at home.

In the sixteenth century more definite plans were framed by Charles V. for the formation of a general fund for every kind of relief to the poor, which was to be distributed by the civil power. Various changes took place in succeeding centuries, till in 1815 it was made the duty of the Government to take charge of charitable institutions and the education of the poor. In 1854 the new Poor Law ordered that the duty of collecting funds was to be laid upon the Church and ecclesiastical bodies, which were thus voluntary and not compulsory ; but

certain duties concerning a few classes are paid by the Communes to which they belong.

Beggar or pauper colonies, established in 1810, have been continued to the present time, and the advantages of such plans have recently been discussed in England. They are maintained, since 1859, by State assistance to a charitable Association, as they have been proved to be far from self-supporting institutions. Various opinions are entertained as to their success.

Russia.

There is a marked difference between the populations of the towns and the country ; a large proportion of the former are only temporary inhabitants, and in the rural districts work can be easily obtained when the population is only ten to the square mile, instead of 347, as in England ; absolute pauperism is therefore rare, the wants of the Russian peasant being few, and the lands of the Commune being apportioned to each member. When villages become over-populated, the Government offers uncultivated Crown lands for cultivation.

We need hardly say that, before the emancipation of the serfs, landlords were bound to look after them ; and besides this, since the year 1775 there existed in every chief town of each Province an institution, under Government patronage, for the special relief of the poor, the funds being supplied from private sources as well as from the Government. In 1864 this power was transferred to local representative assemblies, or Zemstvoes, which had power to raise taxes for the support of the poor, and act quite independently.

In the capital, vast institutions exist for the relief of the poor, and even of beggars, but the paupers are those who are too old or disabled to work, able-bodied persons being able to find employment. The period of residence for settlement is one year.

As usual, the care of the poor formerly devolved upon the monastic orders which possessed landed property. But in the reign of Catherine II. the lands were taken over by the Government, and an office of public charity was opened in each Province, but no taxes are levied for their support, and the population, therefore, is not oppressed to maintain the poor.

Switzerland.

It is almost impossible to give a general idea of the relief of the poor in the twenty-five Cantons, as they present the greatest variety, different plans having been tried in almost every division. At the Reformation Church property was secularised there, as elsewhere, and the care of the poor was transferred to the Communes, taxes being imposed; the exceptions to this law are the towns of Basle and Geneva, and in the Bernese Jura. In other parts, legal and voluntary relief are combined, and voluntary societies work in conjunction with Poor Law authorities. There we find realised what has been so often urged and desired in England, Poor Law officials sitting on the committees of voluntary societies with excellent effect. Six Cantons have no express poor legislation; in others there are laws which were passed between 1804 and 1864; in several there are no taxes at all, abundant revenues being derived from other sources. The legal duties of relations vary in different Cantons.

The plan of boarding-out poor persons, and especially children, in the families of well-reputed and industrious people is more and more acknowledged as one of the best.

Pauperism has been decreasing in Switzerland of late years, especially since 1855.

France.

It is said that "the French system is the most perfect development of charity organisation of which we have any record." Compulsory relief is asked for and given to lunatics and deserted children only; all other provision is "charity;" and it is described as a "happy combination of private benevolence with official guarantees, the public and the Government working together in the great cause of charity."

Indoor relief is administered through Hospices and Hospitals; the outdoor, through the Bureaux de Bienfaisance; the former being all under State supervision, and the latter are managed by unpaid members, assisted by two officers who are paid.

The work of investigation is, however, chiefly carried out by medical men and Sisters of Charity, as many as eleven of the

latter being employed where one relieving officer is to be found in England ; the investigation of cases is thus far more thoroughly carried out than is possible with us.

Paupers have no claim to support by any law now in force ; relief rests upon the moral obligation of the State.

The Revolution of 1789 changed the system of relief, as of many other matters, and the local foundations of charity were swept away, the property being confiscated. At present, though the Government contributes to the funds, and retains its powers of control, the system is essentially local, and there is no Poor Rate or tax.

There is a special law for the administration of poor relief in Paris, passed in 1849 ; a Council, under one Director, controls it. There are twenty Bureaux, or offices, for outdoor relief, which is chiefly given in kind ; and amongst the managers a certain number of ladies are always to be found.

There are also "Houses of Succour" attached to each Bureau, which are served by Sisters of Charity. Relief of various kinds is given, including medical attendance, but it is only outdoor.

A small proportion of orphan and deserted children are placed in an asylum ; upwards of 12,000, under twelve, are boarded-out in the country.* Residence of not less than a year is required. The support of poor relatives is enforced ; children are bound to maintain or assist their parents, or other relative in the direct ascending line—as grandfather, grandmother, &c. The obligation extends to sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, with certain limits.

The class exactly corresponding to our "workhouse inmates" does not exist in France, or, at least, it is differently provided for.

"The sick in mind or body, the infant and the aged, form the great mass of the recipients of relief. The institutions which include both infirm and able-bodied inmates may be classed rather as houses of correction for the offence of begging, than for the relief of paupers. The system is a happy combination of private benevolence with official guarantees. The sympathy of the public is enlisted for the poor by authority,

* It is to be observed that children are not chargeable after they reach their twelfth year, *but they remain, until they are grown up*, under the legal guardianship of the Administrative Commission.

both the public and the Government working together in the great cause of charity. The composition of the unpaid Commissions for indoor and outdoor relief secures for the indigent the active co-operation of charitable persons ; while their connection with the municipalities, and their control by the Government, are guarantees against abuse."

Italy.

It may seem an anomaly to describe the system of poor relief in countries where, as in France and Italy, no legal provision exists generally ; though, as we have seen before, Communes are bound by law to provide for the care of lunatics and foundlings, relations in several degrees being obliged to maintain the destitute. But, as Hospitals are partly supported by contributions from the Communes, the sick and incurable are sent there.

A law concerning charitable works regulated these matters in 1862. The system in Rome was changed in 1871, the municipality taking up what was formerly the duty of the State. The poor throughout Italy are largely helped by ancient charitable foundations, and no tax is levied ; outdoor relief is also administered in the same way, being given in casual alms, allowances to distressed families at home, money and medicines to sick persons at home, and distribution of food and clothing at certain times, according to the direction of the founders.

Many of these bequests date from the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.

The administrators are those who are appointed by the statutes and rules of the various institutions ; but the approval of the representative body of the Province is required, with final reference to the King. There is also a Charity Board in every Commune, elected by the Communal Council. Thus it will be seen that the law exercises a power over all the public charities of Italy, which must be conducted by Boards or Councils in every Commune ; even works of charity established by private founders are placed under the guardianship of their respective Provincial Deputations, all being under the presidency of the Prefect. Any comparison, therefore, between the treatment of the poor, or pauperism, in these countries and

England cannot be made, as the marked line of division between legal and voluntary charity does not exist. Statistics are also wanting for details and numbers.

Portugal.

In this country, more agricultural than industrial, pauperism, as having a legal claim to public relief, does not exist, the population being scattered rather than concentrated. We are told that "the misery which afflicts the indigent classes is not at present greater than it was in those times when charity, rather as a religious precept than as a moral obligation, instituted thousands of establishments for the purpose of relieving the poor and the indigent." These establishments are still, to a great extent, the basis of the actual organisation of public charitable relief, and their number and wealth are great; they are not only or merely private affairs, but are assisted in various ways by the State, by donations, and also by sharing in the duties they carry out. "The efforts of private individuals and the action of the constituted authorities mutually help each other." This may be called a system of official, but not legal, charity—the State, the local Corporations, and private societies, all combining to aid in the work.

Destitute and orphan children up to the age of seven are under the care of their respective municipalities, and are then given up to the Boards of Charitable Relief, which provide for their education. There are, besides, numerous asylums for children who receive a higher education, and there are also day-schools. There are many institutions for the sick, some of which date from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Besides these, there are asylums or almshouses for the aged poor, maintained by charitable societies.

Spain.

No official reports are given as to poor relief in *Spain*, but the charitable institutions are interesting and numerous. The workhouses at Cadiz and Granada, it is said, "in some matters of administration had anticipated improvements in our own."

Constantinople.

The last country of which we have any report to give is the Turkish Empire. In the Koran we find the Prophet re-

commending his people "to show kindness unto parents, and relations, and orphans, and the poor," commanding them "not to oppress the orphan, nor to repulse the beggar." This is therefore a religious obligation on the followers of Mahomet, and large revenues were assigned to the mosques for the exercise of charity at an early period.

The Mussulman religion did not establish Hospitals, which have only been begun, for military purposes, since the Crimean War ; but lunatic asylums exist.

The law thus only regulates the proper distribution of the funds arising from revenues, but these are largely supplemented by private charity.

The Greeks in Turkey relieve those of their own religion by means of committees or vestries attached to the parish churches, entirely independent of the State, all funds being derived from private and charitable sources. Thus are provided—the education of children, for foundlings, who are boarded out in families, who often retain and adopt them after the allotted time is over ; for the sick there are hospitals ; and old men, orphans, and lunatics are placed in asylums ; all the institutions forming part of one great foundation holding large revenues in land.

The requirements of poor parishes are supplemented by several societies for different purposes, which consist of both men and women—ladies of the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches taking an active part in these good works, besides Sisters of Charity, who have seven houses in Constantinople.

It has been stated that in Europe "there have been three stages in dealing with the poor. From the earliest times of Christianity, till late in the Middle Ages, the care of the poor was left to the Church alone ; after that it became a matter of State police, and the method employed was at first one of simple repression ; finally, the municipalities undertook the task of relieving the Church and the police of these duties, or of completing their labours." These stages may be further explained thus : their characteristics being, "first, the system of giving alms at the bidding of the Church ; secondly, that in which measures of repression are adopted in self-defence, until discovered to be a useless expenditure of strength ; thirdly, that according to which, with varying degrees of judgment and skill, the evil is dealt with by the machinery of municipal

government.”* With regard to the last system, it is remarked that “a Poor Tax and a legal right to relief must always go together.”

But the origin of these ideas on the duty of poor relief dates far beyond the Christian era, and is found in the Jewish Talmud. To Christians, almsgiving was a religious duty; while Jews maintained the right of the poor to demand the help to which they were entitled by the religious, as well as the civil, law.

With regard to English history, it is interesting to observe that though after the union of the seven kingdoms the care of the poor was for centuries left in the hands of the Church, the duty was, nevertheless, imposed by the State, and enforced by a law of King Egbert in 827, by which the Bishop was obliged to provide food and clothing for the poor and infirm *who were not able to earn it by their own labour*. Thus early were these conditions enforced, and this law was repeated by King Ethelred, 1014.

It is the third stage which was first carried out in England; a statute of Richard II., 1388, marks the distinction between those able and unable to work, both being bound to their dwelling-place. Church-boxes were set up in the reign of Henry VIII. for voluntary contributions, but in 1572, under Elizabeth, local Poor Rates were established, while severe punishments were enacted for refusing to work. In 1601 parishes were compelled to set the able-bodied poor to work. These plans were adopted in England sooner than in any other country, preceding France by a century; and Germany followed still later in regular organisation.

Even in countries possessing carefully-enacted Poor Laws, we fail to find any precise definition of the degree of poverty which gives a claim to relief. And surely herein lies the great difficulty of the administration of the law. “Destitution” is everywhere stated to be the definition and the test; but, as far as we are aware, the exact understanding and interpretation of this term has yet to be given.†

Poor Law Unions exist in England, France, Belgium, Prussia, Bavaria, and Saxony, Communes being united as parishes are

* Emminghaus.

† “The legal definition of poverty should be laid down by statute.”

in England ; but here alone is there a central body for administration.

In view of the widely varying systems of poor relief which we have reviewed, we may conclude with the remark of the author from whom chiefly our information has been derived, "that the economical disease called poverty is nothing simple or uniform in its nature, but rather is so complicated, and occurs under so many distinct forms, that it cannot be treated with one universal remedy, but requires a wide variety of specific applications."

"England is the only country in Europe in which all the details and results of Poor Law administration are patent, and can be fairly estimated.* When Franklin wrote, 'There is no country in the world where so many provisions are established for the poor as in England, so many hospitals to receive them when they are sick or lame, founded and maintained by voluntary charities, besides a general law made by the rich for the support of the poor. Under all these obligations are the poor modest, humble, thankful, industrious? On the contrary, it may be affirmed that there is no country in the world in which the poor are more idle, dissolute, drunken, and insolent. The day the Parliament passed that law, it took away from before their eyes the greatest of all inducements to industry, frugality, and sobriety, by giving them a dependence on somewhat else than a careful accumulation during youth and health for support in old age and sickness,' he but anticipated the opinion expressed, not less forcibly because in more moderate terms, by the Committee of 1817."

We will now give an extract from this report, published more than seventy years ago :—

"A compulsory contribution for the indigent, from the funds originally accumulated from the labour and industry of others, could not fail, in process of time, with the increase of population, which it was calculated to foster, to produce the unfortunate effect of abating those exertions on the part of the labouring classes on which, according to the nature of things, the happiness and welfare of mankind has been made to rest. By diminishing this natural impulse, by which men are

* "In only a few European countries does any practical distinction exist between Poor Law relief and charity organisation."

instigated to industry and good conduct ; by superseding the necessity of providing, in the season of health and vigour, for the wants of sickness and old age ; and by making poverty and misery the conditions on which relief is to be obtained, your Committee cannot but fear, from a reference to the increased numbers of the poor, and the increased and increasing amount of the sums raised for their relief, that this system is perpetually encouraging and increasing the amount of misery it was designed to alleviate, creating at the same time an unlimited demand on funds which it cannot augment ; and as every system of relief founded on compulsory enactments must be divested of the character of benevolence, so it is without its beneficial effects. As it proceeds from no impulse of charity, it creates no feeling of gratitude, and not unfrequently engenders dispositions and habits calculated to separate, rather than unite, the interests of the higher and lower orders of the community. Even the obligations of natural affection are no longer left to their own impulse, but the mutual support of the nearest relations has been actually enjoined by a positive law, which the authority of magistrates is continually required to enforce. The progress of these evils, which are inherent in the system itself, appears to have been favoured by the circumstances of modern times, by an extension of the law in practice, and by some deviations from its most important provisions. . . . The result appears to have been highly prejudicial to the moral habits and consequent happiness of a great body of the people, who have been reduced to the degradation of a dependence upon parochial support ; while the rest of the community, including the most industrious class, has been oppressed by a weight of contribution taken from those very means which would otherwise have been applied more beneficially to the supply of employment. And as the funds which each person can expend in labour are limited in proportion as the Poor Rate diminishes those funds, in the same proportion will the wages of labour be reduced, to the immediate and direct prejudice of the labouring classes, the system thus producing the very necessity which it is created to relieve.”

“It appears, from the whole evidence of the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834, that the clause of the 43rd of Elizabeth which directs the parents and children of the impotent to be assessed for their support is very seldom enforced. In any

ordinary state of society we much doubt the wisdom of such an enactment. The duty of supporting the parents and children in old age or infirmity is so strongly enforced by our natural feelings that it is often well performed even among savages, and almost always so in a nation deserving the name of civilised. We believe that England is the only European country in which it is neglected. To add the sanction of the law in countries where that of Nature is found sufficient—to make that compulsory which would otherwise be voluntary—cannot be necessary, and if unnecessary, must be mischievous. But if the deficiencies of parental and filial affection are to be supplied by the parish, and the natural motives to the exercise of those virtues are to be thus withdrawn, it may be proper to endeavour to replace them, however imperfectly, by artificial stimulants; and to make fines, distress warrants, or imprisonment act as substitutes for gratitude and love. The attempt, however, is scarcely ever made.”

MENDICANTS AND VAGRANTS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

IN tracing the history of poor relief throughout the different countries of Europe, it is remarkable to find everywhere, in all nations and through all time, the plague and perplexity of mendicancy, the repression of which may be considered to have been the foundation of Poor Laws, endeavours to extirpate this form of poverty being attempted, but everywhere in vain.

We cannot but be struck by the persistency of this evil, baffling all efforts in every age up to the present day, in our own country as well as elsewhere. We cannot forget the statements of the early years of Elizabeth's reign, enacting severe punishments for "rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars," even the penalty of death being inflicted for repeated offences. In every county, we are told, there were from 300 to 400 able-bodied vagrants. As early as the fourteenth century we find similar laws in Spain and in France. In the eighteenth century Germany and Switzerland adopted legislation of this kind; and in most European countries strict measures were taken against the same class. The very harshness of this policy led to the adoption of Poor Laws in nearly all European countries, justice compelling some such course in order to meet the necessities of the poor; even givers of alms were punished as well as recipients, and the laws of settlement were stricter even than our own. The history of the laws for the suppression or punishment of vagrancy throughout Europe belongs rather to criminal legislation than the Poor Law. They may be said to have failed to effect the objects for which they were enacted. This failure has led to the establishment and organisation of private charity in order to supplement the deficiencies of the Poor Law.

"Prohibitions against begging are probably universal throughout Europe, though the punishments prescribed vary

considerably. The results obtained vary also. . . . The French and Belgian Dépôts de Mendicité and the Dutch Beggar Colonies are to be met with in no other country."

In *Germany* (Prussia) begging is punished by imprisonment, not exceeding six weeks, or, under circumstances of aggravation, it may extend to three months, or beggars may be confined in a workhouse for two years subsequently, under certain conditions. Under the voluntary system of *Elberfeld* "begging may be first checked, then stamped out, by the only sovereign remedy—an unconditional diminution of almsgiving. This town is more free from begging than any other in the country."

In *Bavaria* the severest punishment against beggars were enacted in 1751, and by a further order of 1816 voluntary charity is not allowed to contravene the policy of the laws against beggars.

In *Austria* a law of 1552 orders that "none shall beg save the old and infirm;" and in subsequent years various endeavours were made with a view to abolish begging and enforce work, but it is said that the law is now not strictly enforced.

In *Switzerland* there are a great number of Anti-Mendicity Societies, but experience proves that begging is a profession and trade which flourishes as long as supplies continue; and although street-beggars are forbidden, and punishment is threatened, the practice is still carried on.

Sweden, like the rest of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was overrun by mendicity, and the fact gave rise to a system of poor relief in 1571, the "suppression of begging" being really the chief object in view. "Beggars' Orders" were enforced by every generation, yet the plague became worse and worse. Begging is now entirely forbidden, but with little success.

In *France* beggars are not allowed, nor have been for centuries, the severest laws against them having been framed ever since 1596. All such are sent to institutions or dépôts, and made to work, or are sent to the police magistrate and imprisoned.

Belgium enacted laws against beggars from the beginning of the fifteenth century to the present time. As early as 1515 it was stated that "those who begged by profession made more

money than those who worked for their living." Yet it was ordered by the Assembly of 1798 that "begging must be suppressed with the utmost energy." In 1808 "Dépôts de Mendicité" were created by law in every Department, but the cost of these soon became enormous, and they were the abodes of idlers. In 1848 the young were separated from the old, and two reformatories were established for them.

In the *Netherlands* an edict of Charles V. in 1531 was directed to the prevention and punishment of begging, which was, as usual, the beginning of all efforts for the relief of the poor. There are now Beggar Colonies for their reception and employment, supported by the Communes, supplemented by the State.

In *Italy* permission was given in 1865 to beg in those Communes which have no arrangements to provide for beggars, but in all other cases it is forbidden, especially at night. There are Houses where they can be detained, but many beg without any permission.*

Russia.—In St. Petersburg a society exists for the relief and classification of beggars, entirely under Government control. They are either sent back to their Communes, or relieved in institutions, or sent to magistrates, but "the law is not enforced, and Moscow is full of beggars," and mendicancy appears to be tolerated more than in other countries.

There are laws for the suppression of mendicancy in *Portugal*, but they are not enforced with any degree of strictness. Mendicants may be imprisoned for a term not exceeding six months, and asylums for such exist.

In *Spain*, as early as 1351, beggars were subject to severe punishment for first and all subsequent offences, extending even to the penalty of death.

In *Denmark* beggars are liable to fifteen days' imprisonment, vagrants to thirty days', but, as usual, in the country local beggars are tolerated. In Copenhagen mendicancy is rarely seen.

* By laws of 1871 beggars and vagrants may be taken before the magistrate, and are liable to imprisonment for three or six months, after which they are sent to their Communes, and must remain there, unless by permission to leave, even for a term of five years.

The efforts of various Popes since the middle of the sixteenth century to repress mendicancy appear to have been in vain.

In *Belgium* begging was prohibited by law in 1808, and a *Dépôt de Mendicité* created in every Department, to which all beggars were to be sent on arrest, and vagrants to prison. Separation of classes and the enforcement of labour were attempted, but found to be impracticable. The following remark may be laid to heart, and considered in other countries besides Belgium :—“Thus the five *Dépôts* became great hostelries for supplying board, lodging, and congenial society, to all the profligates of the country at the public expense. The system was found to be intolerably expensive, and perfectly ineffectual as a means of repression.” In 1848 fresh laws were added, that applicants should not be admitted without the sanction of authorities. Those admitted by their own desire may be forced to remain for thirty days ; and if they return within the same year, are to be detained for a period of from six to twelve months at the discretion of the managers.

“The main result has been the toleration of mendicancy as a lesser evil than that of supporting beggars in the *Dépôts* for indefinite periods.” But this system was altered in 1866, when able-bodied beggars were to be arrested and sent to prison for various terms—those under fourteen being placed in reformatories till twenty. The *Dépôts* have been altered, and there is now an extensive penal colony for beggars and vagrants, which can give employment to 1,500 persons ; thus the *Communes* are relieved of the burden of their maintenance.

It may be useful to observe that an attempt to employ paupers *without coercion* absorbed large sums of money, and failed in 1842.

As an exception to the countries we have already noticed, *Poland* is without laws or restrictions against mendicancy, and as there is a Slave superstition that the applications of beggars should not be refused, they have a prosperous career in that country.

In the oldest law-book of Iceland, preceding the introduction of Christianity (which, we have seen, was adopted in Sweden and Norway), begging and giving of alms to beggars were both punished with outlawry.

It was during the second of the three stages of poor relief to which we have alluded (p. 27) that measures of police were taken against begging, which had been commended during the first period, or at least encouraged by almsgiving.

OUTDOOR RELIEF IN ENGLAND.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS IN 1834, AND FROM THE WRITINGS AND SPEECHES OF VARIOUS AUTHORITIES TO 1888.

As the subject of outdoor relief has lately been prominently brought before the public in the discussions on the Local Government Bill, it may be useful to give a few extracts from the Report of the Commission appointed in 1834 to investigate the whole matter, previous to the introduction of the Poor Law Amendment Act of that year.

The evils which had at that time become widespread and flagrant are not known to the present generation, who may not be able or willing to search the annals of Blue Books to discover them.

As there appears to be a tendency at the present time in some quarters to revert to former systems, it cannot but be helpful to give some details of the existing condition of things concerning pauperism more than fifty years ago, forgotten by many and unknown to more.

At the beginning of the Report of the Commissioners we read, "the great source of abuse is the outdoor relief afforded to the able-bodied on their own account, or on that of their families. This is given either in kind or in money ; but the latter is still more prevalent."

Instances are then given from various parts of England detailing the abuses of the different systems of relief, and the following remarks are made :—

"Out-relief is that now most extensively given, and it appears to contain in itself the elements of an almost indefinite extension ; of an extension, in short, which may ultimately absorb the whole fund out of which it arises. Among the elements

of extension are the constantly diminishing reluctance to claim an apparent benefit, the receipt of which imposes no sacrifice, except a sensation of shame, quickly obliterated by habit, even if not prevented by example; the difficulty, often amounting to impossibility on the part of those who administer and award relief, of ascertaining whether any and what necessity for it exists; and the existence in many cases of positive motives on their parts to grant it when unnecessary, or themselves to create the necessity."

"Another evil connected with outdoor relief, and arising from its undefined character, is the natural tendency to award to the deserving more than is necessary, or, where more than necessary relief is afforded to all, to distinguish the deserving by extra allowances. . . . It appears that such endeavours to constitute the distributors of relief into a tribunal for the reward of merit, out of the property of others, have not only failed in effecting the benevolent intentions of their promoters, but have become sources of fraud on the part of the distributors, and of discontent and violence on the part of the claimants."

"A common consequence is that, to satisfy the clamours of the undeserving, the general scale of relief is raised; but the ultimate result of such a proceeding appears always to be to augment the distress which it was intended to mitigate, and to render more fierce the discontent which it was intended to appease. Profuse allowances excite the most extravagant expectations on the part of the claimants, who conceive that an inexhaustible fund is devoted to their use, and that they are wronged to the extent of whatever falls short of their claims. Such relief partakes of the nature of indiscriminate almsgiving in its effects as a bounty on indolence and vice; but the apparently legal sanction to this parochial almsgiving renders the discontent on denial the most intense. Wherever, indeed, public charities are profusely administered, we hear from those who are engaged in their administration complaints of the discontent and disorders introduced." "It appears, from all our returns, that in every district the discontent of the labouring classes is proportioned to the money dispensed in Poor's Rates, or in voluntary charities."

Again, "It appears to the pauper that the Government has undertaken to repeal in his favour the ordinary laws of Nature; to enact that the children shall not suffer for the misconduct of

their parents, the wife for that of the husband, or the husband for that of the wife ; that no one shall lose the means of comfortable subsistence, whatever be his indolence, prodigality, or vice—in short, that the penalty which, after all, must be paid by some one for idleness and improvidence is to fall, not on the guilty person or on his family, but on the proprietors of the lands and houses encumbered by his settlement.”

Let us note the following remarks of fifty years ago on a subject recently dwelt upon as important :—

“Uniformity in the administration of relief we deem essential as a means, first, of reducing the perpetual shifting from parish to parish, and fraudulent removals to parishes where profuse management prevails from parishes where the management is less profuse ; secondly, of preventing the discontents which arise among the paupers maintained under the less profuse management, from comparing it with the more profuse management of adjacent districts ; and, thirdly, of bringing the management, which consists in details, more closely within the public control. . . . The importance of uniformity in reducing removals appears throughout our evidence. We have found that the confirmed paupers usually have a close knowledge of the detailed management of various parishes (although the managers rarely have), and act upon that knowledge in the choice of workhouses.” “The notion generated by the indefiniteness of the existing system of relief is that the Poor’s Rates are an inexhaustible fund, from which all who call themselves poor are prevented drawing to the extent of their desires only by the cupidity or partiality of parish officers.” *

To these extracts we may add that there was a general consensus of opinion at the Central Conference of Guardians held in 1882, that we should try to return to the state of things in the early part of last century, when (to use the words of the Royal Commissioners of 1834) “Parochial relief appears to have been given chiefly through the workhouses, and not to

* One of the propositions to the Select Committee agreed to by the Charity Organisation Society is as follows :—“The latitude permitted to Guardians has been the source of much mal-administration of the law. Continuity and uniformity of practice have been altogether unattainable. Such success as has been achieved has been the result of the action of individual Guardians ; at their retirement, or during their temporary absence, the lax system returns.”

have been extended to many beside the impotent. Relief was considered a burden to the payers, and a degradation to the receivers—a remedy for unexpected calamity, and a mitigation of the punishment inflicted by Nature on extravagance and improvidence. The paupers were a small and disreputable minority. All other classes were anxious to diminish the number of applicants, and to reduce the expense of their maintenance.”

“One would have thought that all who are aware how nearly the nation was brought to ruin, moral and financial, in the three first decades of this century, must agree that every man should be encouraged to feel that he has descended in the scale of manhood when he gives up the task of independence allotted to him by Providence, and throws himself upon the forced contributions of his neighbours.”—GENERAL L. GARDINER.

The following opinions were expressed before the Lords' Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888 :—

“If outdoor relief were abolished, charity would receive such an impetus that it would prove sufficient. He thought it was the business and duty of the rich to take up cases of deserving distress. . . . It is hopeless to look for much improvement unless the present too wide discretion of the Guardians is curtailed, and by legislation and Orders of the Local Government Board the progress that has already been made is made general and permanent.”—MR. A. G. CROWDER, Guardian of St. George's-in-the-East.

“Outdoor relief was a direct and positive injury to the working classes, apart from the moral injury ; and he believed that for every penny given in outdoor relief, twopence was taken from wages.”—MR. ALBERT PELL, Guardian of St. George's-in-the-East.

The Rev. C. H. Turner, Rector of St. George's-in-the-East, said, “In his opinion, the administration of outdoor relief had a great tendency to make the poor more improvident than they were already, and indisposed them to take advantage of savings banks and provident funds. It was also detrimental to their moral character, in not only making them dependent, but it had a great effect on their relations. It also acted as a stimulus to increasing the population, because of improvident marriages.”

Mr. Hedley, Local Government Board Inspector in the

Metropolitan District, said, "He would like to see outdoor relief abolished as far as possible. It operated most injuriously on thrift and on the general providence of the labouring classes. Relief ought only to be given to the destitute, and when given, it ought to be adequate. Outdoor relief, as at present administered, was always inadequate to meet destitution, and was mostly given in aid of unknown resources. It also had a very baneful effect on charity, which it stifled."

Mr. J. S. Davy, Poor Law Inspector for Lancashire and Yorkshire, "disapproved labour yards and the labour test, and advocated the entire abolition of outdoor relief."

Mr. W. Vallance, Clerk to the Whitechapel Poor Law Guardians, said, "Their policy up to 1870 was that of meeting apparent existing needs by small doles of outdoor relief. The experience of the winter 1869-70 taught that the system fostered pauperism, improvidence, and imposture, without helping the poor, and the Guardians began by gradually restricting outdoor relief in out-of-work cases, until they were enabled to suspend entirely the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order. No cases of out-relief other than those of sudden and urgent necessity had been added to the list for nearly eighteen years. The change of policy had resulted in a diminution of indoor as well as outdoor pauperism, and in an improvement of the condition of the poor."

Mr. W. H. Long, Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, in addressing a meeting of his constituents in April, 1888, said, "He had no sympathy for the able-bodied pauper, who ought not to exist. There was no greater mistake than to suppose that because the Poor Rate fell directly upon the occupiers of land or houses they alone felt the weight of the burden. There was no body upon whom it fell with greater heaviness than upon the thrifty and industrious labourer and the artisan. It was the greatest drain upon the capital of the country, and it was to capital that the working man had to look for his wages, and if by any law or foolish administration of outdoor relief with a lavish hand they brought up the Poor Rate to the extent it reached in the early part of the century, they would bring upon themselves a ruinous burden. The outdoor paupers of England and Wales were as eight to one compared with the indoor paupers."

In a recent paper on the English Poor Rate, by Major P. G.

Craigie, he remarked "on the reforms effected in particular Unions, where, without either driving paupers into the house or out of the Union, the cases of out-relief were reduced from 1,100 to 66, and 10d. per pound saved in the annual outlay. The conclusions drawn were that the statistics of pauperism showed it to be a largely preventible disease, which could be restricted with benefit to the poor and relief to the ratepayers at the will of the local authorities. . . . The all-powerful democracy of the day should be impressed with the proved danger of out-relief, and the proved economic benefit of a strictly-administered Poor Law should be insisted on. The single obligation of the Guardians to relieve destitution should not be confounded with the relief of distress and hard cases by charity, which is totally outside the functions of the Poor Rate; nor should it be overlooked that a system of outdoor relief, so far from an advantage to the labourer, exposed the lower working class to an unfair competition on the part of those who, deriving part of their support from the Poor Rate, could afford to sell their labour for an inadequate remuneration."

"Where there is a moderate stringency in enforcing orders for the workhouse, there pauperism, indoor as well as outdoor, diminishes, and the Poor Rate diminishes. . . . One experienced relieving officer expresses himself thus: 'No relieving officer, no outdoor relief,' the mere existence and presence of the relieving officer originating outdoor relief. The time has arrived for causing outdoor relief to cease altogether—not abruptly, but by gradual and systematic steps. . . . No doubt it would create much surprise to perceive how easily outdoor relief would disappear without any one being the worse for its disappearance; while the indoor relief would not be increased. By not being able to look forward to outdoor relief as a last resort, a general thriftiness would be created, by which persons would provide for the future needs of themselves and their families. For those who investigate cases know that scarcely a case of destitution arises which is not produced from excessive improvidence or by worse conduct."—MR. N. A. ROCK.

"Labourers earning good wages are to be encouraged to spend them in drink or wastefulness, in place of insuring themselves against the claims of sickness and old age in a sound friendly society, and then to 'cadge' upon their thrifty neighbours in order to protect themselves from the legitimate

consequences of their own immoral conduct. Anything more socialistic or demoralising in its effects cannot be conceived. . . . If the drinking, wasteful workman has a right to outdoor relief at all from his thrifty, sober neighbours, he has a right to a very great deal more than he now gets, and his out-relief should feed, clothe, and warm him, besides paying his rent. I need scarcely say that it does nothing of the kind ; but all this is done for him in the Union house. When the demoralisation of the labouring classes has been sufficiently effected by well-intentioned but short-sighted philanthropists, and rates raised accordingly, we shall find ourselves in the condition of things which preceded the new Poor Law.”—MR. G. R. PORTAL.

There is a still further expression of opinion by Mr. Albert Pell, whose evidence has been already given : “ It would seem that there has never been a time when the object of the Poor Law should be more clearly ascertained, expounded, and strictly observed, than at the present, seeing that it contemplates the relief of destitution, not poverty, and that its proper function is rather one of police than of charity.”

“ In relieving destitution out of the Poor Rate, a reference to the character of the applicant should not in the Board Room influence the Guardians, whose official duty there is simply to relieve destitution with other people’s money. For the worst character they are bound to do this, adequately and humanely ; for the best character (‘deserving’ is the stock phrase) they should officially do nothing more. If they do, they are relieving, not the so-called ‘deserving’ pauper (or ‘industrial pensioner’), but his neighbours from fulfilling duties which generous feeling and Christian teaching suggest and insist on, and which, if not interfered with, have hitherto proved equal to the occasion. The idea expressed in and out of Parliament, that a strict administration of the Poor Law will fill the work-houses, is contradicted by fact and experience. A withdrawal of outdoor relief acts as a tonic by which the disease (for disease it is) of pauperism is counteracted and subdued ; and, with the decline of the disease among outdoor cases, the numbers of indoor cases drop, or at all events are not swelled, while the natural stimulus to industry and self-preservation, so cruelly sapped and hindered by the expectancy of outdoor relief, comes again into action, and the whole tone and circumstances of the poor are slowly but certainly bettered. . . .

Experience, to those who have studied the matter, proves beyond doubt that bounty out of the Poor Rate, prompted as it frequently is by the most selfish motives masquerading as charity, is one of those tender mercies which, in its effect on the poor themselves, specially poor children, is cruel in the extreme."

That the amount of pauperism is mainly caused by and mainly dependent upon the encouragement given to it in various localities is a fact beginning to be recognised. The following statistics from a Northamptonshire Union are striking and instructive as to the decrease of pauperism during the last fifteen years. The amount of outdoor relief given in 1873 was £5,618; in 1888 it was £491, while the number of indoor paupers remained the same; the proportion of indoor to outdoor was about 2 to 1, and the proportion of paupers to population was 1 to 74.

We may add the concluding paragraph of the annual report of this Union:—"The moral and social saving, which is of course the most important, cannot be so plainly tabulated; but it may be permissible to note one very gratifying feature of it—viz., that very many who would otherwise have been on the relief list as children with their parents, have, during these last fifteen years, grown up into manhood and womanhood without receiving any sort of help from the Poor Rates; and the general experience is that those persons who as children know nothing of the relieving officer or the parish doctor, and hear nothing of their parents going to the Board of Guardians, do not as men and women make the Poor Law their first resource in times of difficulty and need. . . . In 1873 there were on the out-relief lists no less than 254 children, and during the last half-year only two; at the present time there is no child at all receiving out-relief, nor has there been for the last two months. Though there were so many children having out-relief, there were as many in the workhouse then as since—viz., twenty-six in January, 1873, and 1888."

Does not this statement help to prove the fact that the manufacture of paupers and pauperism is both practicable and easy?

The following is from the report of the Bradfield Union:—"Previous to 1876 all widows with children received out-relief as a matter of course, and one of the results was that

the sons and daughters of aged or infirm widows made the receipt of it an excuse for not assisting to support them. Impressed with this and other evils, the Guardians in 1876 resolved to give no more out-relief to widows after the first month of their widowhood, except in temporary cases of sickness, but to offer the house to destitute widows with their children ; or, if they preferred it, to take all their children except one into the house. . . . Improvident marriages have certainly decreased, and thrift after marriage has certainly increased ; this is, however, no doubt, in a great measure, due to the restriction (almost abolition) of all out-relief in the Union and only in part to that of widows able-bodied. Widows can claim, and do obtain, full current wages for their services. Sons and daughters support the aged and infirm widows. Begging by widows' children, once so common, if not yet extinct, has so much decreased that I never hear of it, and they attend school as regularly as their neighbours. A long experience has clearly shown that 90 per cent. of the pauperism of the rural districts is *created* by out-relief."

Extracts from speeches in Parliament on the Local Government Bill, 1888 :—

Mr. Ritchie, President of the Local Government Board, said, "As far as he knew, there was no recommendation from any responsible body—any Commission or Committee—to the effect that there should be a contribution towards outdoor relief. There had, however, been a very large number of recommendations in favour of giving some relief from a particular kind of property towards indoor pauperism. Although he was very far from saying that in most cases outdoor relief had been unduly or lavishly given, yet all reformers had striven against the tendency which had existed in some parts of the country towards lavish expenditure on outdoor pauperism. Where outdoor relief had been recklessly administered it had done a great deal of injury to the people."

Mr. Rathbone (Liverpool) "objected to any proposal which would lead to laxity in giving outdoor relief. He maintained that outdoor relief had always had the effect of lowering wages. . . . It was doing away with what was now a bribe or inducement to give outdoor relief with the idea that it was cheaper than indoor relief. They knew, by a most fatal experience, how this idea of the old Poor Law demoralised the

whole character of the rural population, and a considerable part of the urban population of this country. . . . Cases of deserving poor ought to be dealt with, to a large extent, by private or organised charity, and could alone be advantageously dealt with in that manner. If they bore in mind the immense importance of preserving the independence of character, and encouraging providence in our population, they should seek to put the relative position of indoor and outdoor relief on such a footing as would discourage that laxity which so rapidly encouraged pauperism and demoralisation. . . . The effect of a similar system in the East End of London had not only been to discourage idlers to rely on the rates, but had been also to encourage the action of the wealthier classes in providing adequate relief in its best form to the deserving poor. He wished that all hon. members remembered, as he did, the introduction of the new Poor Law. At that time the state of the country was such that our working classes were paupers, and our working women were becoming prostitutes. The Government of the day had the courage to bring in a Bill which caused such an outcry as few younger men had heard. It would have been possible for the Conservative Party of that day to have raised a great outcry, but what did the Duke of Wellington do? He came forward and said that he had never known a more courageous act than the introduction of the new Poor Law by the Government of that day, and that he and his party would support them through it."

Mr. W. H. Long thought "it would be generally admitted that the administration of the Poor Law by the Boards of Guardians in recent years had shown that they had endeavoured to realise what a wise application of the Poor Law really meant. They had recognised that it was their duty, not to administer the rates as if they were charitable resources placed at their disposal, but a demand on the pockets of the people, the deserving poor included."

Mr. F. S. Powell thought "that a consideration of the Report of the Commission which had inquired into pauperism before the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834 would be a warning to those who spoke blindly as to the tests imposed at that time, especially with regard to the condition of the rural districts. . . . While he did not believe that it was possible entirely to dispense with indoor relief, he thought

that legal relief ought to be diminished as far as possible, and that voluntary and charitable relief ought to be increased. When he heard hon. members making speeches in that House about sending poor people to the workhouse he doubted whether the rich classes were doing their duty. Poor people were often relieved at the expense of the ratepayers when they ought to be relieved by their wealthy neighbours. He could not agree that indoor relief manufactured a whole generation of paupers, and it was undoubted that much mischief was done by outdoor relief. He should like to see more undertaken by private benevolence and less by Poor Law relief. The proposal of the Government would undoubtedly discourage outdoor relief, and, so far, it would be advantageous."

Viscount Ebrington said, "There was a time when outdoor relief was freely given in this country, and he supposed the labouring population were never in a more miserable condition. Wages were almost always lowest in those localities where outdoor relief was most freely given."

As reference has been made to some Poor Law Unions where the giving of out-relief has been greatly restricted, if not done away with, we add an extract from the last report issued by the Guardians of Whitechapel, to March, 1888 :—*

"The policy of relief administration in Whitechapel has undergone a marked change during the last twenty years. Up to 1870 the system may be said to have been that of meeting apparent existing circumstances of need by small doles of outdoor relief. . . . The experience of the winter of 1869-70, however, was such as to lead the Guardians to review their position and earnestly to aim at reforming a system which was felt to be fostering pauperism and encouraging idleness, improvidence, and imposture, whilst the 'relief' in no true sense helped the poor. It was seen that voluntary charity largely consisted of indiscriminate almsgiving; that it accepted no definite obligation as distinct from the function of Poor Law relief; that the Poor Law was relied upon to supplement private benevolence; that the almsgivers too frequently were the advocates of the poor in their demands upon the public rates; and that both

* It is much to be desired that this example were followed in all Unions, and annual reports published for the enlightenment, not only of Guardians, but of all ratepayers, who ought to, and might thus, take an intelligent interest in these matters.

Poor Law and charity were engaged in the relief of distress, much of which a thoughtless benevolence and a lax relief administration had created. . . . They began by gradually restricting outdoor relief in 'out of work' cases, until they were able entirely to suspend the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, and to apply strictly the principle of the Prohibitory Order. . . . Thus the door of out-relief became gradually closed, and, as a fact, no cases—other than those of sudden or urgent necessity, relieved by the relieving officers in kind—have now for nearly eighteen years been added to the outdoor relief lists. . . . These progressive results have not been accompanied by a proportionate, nor even an appreciable, increase in the number of indoor paupers relieved. . . . This is probably owing, in part, to the discouragement which the system has produced to speculative applications for relief, and, in part, to the concentration of official and voluntary effort upon the dispauperisation of the poor. There is also reason to believe that the policy which has been pursued has resulted in an improvement in the condition of the poor. Rents are said to be better paid, and more money to be deposited in savings and penny banks than formerly; whilst publicans and pawnbrokers are equally lamenting the badness of trade. The poor are certainly more self-respecting than they were. . . . So uniform and strict has become the administration of legal relief, and so well understood is the system, that an application for prospective outdoor relief is now rarely made to the Guardians. By 'prospective' relief is to be understood relief other than that already afforded by the relieving officer under circumstances of urgent necessity, and submitted to the Guardians for review merely. . . . The main object and design of the new Poor Law being to relieve destitution, not to do the work of charity, the principle was affirmed that in such relief 'the condition of the pauper ought to be on the whole less eligible than that of the independent labourer,' whilst the relief should be adequate to his wants. . . . The practice of almost uniform outdoor relief, taken in conjunction with the legal right which exists, amounts to a vast provision of State aid for every ill that flesh is heir to. Superseding, too, as it does, the necessity for the exercise of self-denial or prudent forethought, the poor are educated to dependence, being practically told that every recurring misfortune or contingency of life will be amply met out of the public rates; whilst they are demoralised by the knowledge that the

adversity which flows from idleness, intemperance, or improvidence, is rewarded by an eligible form of relief at the expense of the industrious, thrifty, and self-reliant."

In fact, the Poor Law has been claimed as a "National Club," upon which the poor have a claim given them by the law, and which they mean to enforce.

In connection with these extracts we will add some from the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Poor Relief, 1888 :—

"This decrease [of pauperism] must, to a great extent, be ascribed to the more strict and efficient administration of the law by Boards of Guardians, and especially to the restriction of out-relief. While admitting that where no organised method of charity has been established, outdoor relief cannot, without hardship to the poor, be dispensed with in certain cases, we cannot too strongly insist on the disastrous results which are certain to follow from outdoor relief if not very carefully administered, and kept within narrow limits—not only in bringing heavy burdens on the ratepayers, but, what is far more important, in demoralising the working class by the discouragement of thrift and honest industry. . . . In the case of the aged and infirm who are of respectable character, it is a very general practice to give out-relief, which usually takes the form of small weekly doles, insufficient for the support of the pauper, and which, from the difficulty of ascertaining the true circumstances of the recipient, especially in large towns, are frequently granted to persons who are not really destitute. Such doles are eked out either by private charity or some aid from relatives, or by slender earnings; in which latter case, to the extent to which the person who is assisted in that way obtains employment, there is no doubt a tendency to reduce the rate of wages for services of that particular character. . . . Frequently, also, if the doles were withdrawn, it would be found that there are relatives who are in a position to afford the necessary support, and who would do so when aid was not forthcoming from the rates."

The importance attached to the subject of out-relief is shown by the various Orders and Reports issued from time to time by the Central Board concerning its administration. In 1844 the "Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order" permitted such relief for able-bodied paupers only "on account of sudden and

urgent necessity, of illness, and, with certain restrictions, in the case of widows." Again, in 1852 some alteration was made, and in 1869 an important Report was given by the President of the Local Government Board, in order to induce Boards of Guardians rigidly to insist upon the main principles of the English Poor Law, especially the workhouse test. In 1871 a fresh circular was issued, in which the question of the grant of outdoor relief was specially discussed. Again, in 1878 the chief points of the former Order were recapitulated and enforced. Besides these, the reports of numerous Inspectors bear upon the subject, and Poor Law Conferences took the matter up, with the result that the percentage of outdoor paupers had fallen from 4·6 in 1871 to 3·0 in 1883.

It is the opinion of the learned German Dr. Aschrott, who has made an elaborate study of the English Poor Law, that public relief should be given to the able-bodied, but he adds, "If this is introduced, their labour must be fully employed in return for the relief afforded. If an evil effect on the social life of the nation is to be avoided, this relief must be subject to the condition of shutting up the paupers within the four walls of an institution, and thus limiting their personal freedom. Whether such institution should be a workhouse or a pauper colony is a further question which can only be answered in view of local circumstances. The relief of the able-bodied cannot be carried on without regulations which are to a certain extent penal."

Again, he remarks, "It is significant that in England Poor Law relief is extended to one class of persons to whom it would not be afforded in Continental States, and in whose case serious danger is caused by an ill-considered system of relief. This class is that of the able-bodied poor. In England the obligation exists to relieve the destitute man who prefers to have recourse to the Poor Law rather than maintain himself. . . . The able-bodied class could not be indulgently treated without the exercise of a demoralising influence on the general working population."*

A remarkable investigation was made a few years ago into the "Causes of Pauperism" by the Committee of the

* A law still exists in Prussia for the relief of the able-bodied, but it has completely fallen into disuse.

Manchester Board of Guardians, and published in the Local Government Chronicle, March, 1884, with the following results :—Ten classes were described, and from the total of each class it was found that more than half, or above 51 per cent., of the cases were caused directly from drinking habits; in men, one-fourth arose from drunkenness, but in women, only one-twentieth of the pauperism was chargeable to this cause. It is a remarkable fact that “want of employment” amounted to only one-fortieth part of the pauperism. And this fact is found to agree with the results arrived at by the Mansion House Committee in 1887, which investigated the case of the unemployed.

It was stated at Manchester that “it is a fact of serious import that the majority of cases which become chargeable from drunkenness are men in skilled employments. . . . Many of the children of drunkards have to be maintained and educated, and the class of widows and children of such persons produces about one-fifth of the pauperism.” The Report concludes with these words :—“We have the very serious fact that almost all the pauperism we have to deal with arises from causes which come into operation during the adult period of the life of those who make application for relief; and that whilst nearly one-half of the destitution arises from sickness, accident, and misfortune, a full half is produced by wilful self-indulgence in vicious habits.” We cannot help adding the inquiry whether a large portion of the “sickness and accidents” might not also be referred to the same cause? We believe there can be no doubt as to the answer.

The same investigation revealed the fact that pauperism caused by old age and infirmity accounted for one-eighth of the whole number. Were this the case to a still larger extent, how willingly should we all contribute our share towards their comfort and maintenance; but here we must not omit a remark which follows, as regards even this class of inmates, and which is too important to be overlooked, as bearing upon former comments on the results of legal relief :—“The most discouraging aspect of some of these cases is that sons and daughters who have emigrated do not send money to assist their aged parents.” Why should they, when they are well cared for from another and a legal source on which they have a claim?

As the argument most frequently used in urging outdoor rather than indoor relief is its economy, we may quote again from the book previously referred to.* The apparent simplicity of outdoor relief, and its avoidance of costly establishments, with all their attendant expenditure, is at first attractive, especially when the humane side of the question is added to the financial plea. "The objection is one to which we should attach little weight, even admitting its accuracy. It has been often shown that in the case of a Poor Law system the main question is, and must be, what kind of relief is most for the interest of the community, for the advantage of the State; and the question of expense is subordinate to this consideration. The objection is, in truth, very short-sighted. People only ask what expense will be incurred by the relief of a given number of paupers in this or the other fashion, and omit to reflect that the tendency of the workhouse, under a proper Poor Law system, is to reduce the number of persons relieved. . . . Accordingly, any temporary increase in expenditure will be amply balanced in the course of years by the saving consequent on the reduction of pauperism."

With regard to the objection of inhumanity, we may close these remarks with a quotation from the Report of 1834, which bears upon the subject of legislating for extreme cases, instead of on general principles:—"Where cases of real hardship occur, the remedy must be applied by individual charity, a virtue for which no system of compulsory relief can be, or ought to be, a substitute."

The term "legal charity," which was employed by some writers sixty years ago who objected to the action of the Poor Law, was not applicable to the system founded by the Act of Elizabeth, 1601, the object of which was to repress pauperism, and not to indulge humane impulses; and it is somewhat remarkable that nearly all questions of Poor Law reform have been in the direction of reverting to the principles of that Act, the three divisions of which are still adhered to—viz., the relief of the infirm, the needs of the able-bodied, and the education of the pauper children.

In further confirmation of these principles, we add some extracts from the Report of one of the Inspectors for 1887-8,

* "The English Poor Law," by Dr. Aschrott.

which deals most fully with the subject of outdoor relief—that by Mr. Fleming, comprising the district of Dorset and Southampton, and parts of Wilts and Surrey. The number of outdoor paupers is more than four times as great as the indoor; and with regard to this he writes:—"The lavish administration of out-relief, to which I referred last year as the unfavourable feature of administration in this district, unfortunately continues. . . . It is not easy to arrive at any sufficient reason why the Guardians choose to give so much outdoor relief in the counties under my observation. Beyond question, there are a great many more out-paupers than there need or should be. In many instances those who need relief do not get it, whilst it is given to those who are not really in distress; or, if real destitution do exist, the amount of relief afforded is cruelly inadequate. . . . So much unsound doctrine with regard to Poor Law administration has of late been suggested as worthy of acceptance, that it seems almost impossible that the true position of the question can have been appreciated by those who now advocate a form of relief which had the fullest trial, and led to such dire misfortune, in the earlier part of this century. The condition of affairs in the days when out-relief was administered without the present salutary checks has been so much lost sight of that Guardians are astonished when they are told that before the introduction of the 'new Poor Law' the Poor Rates in many parishes ranged from 8s. to 21s. in the pound upon the rateable value. Even now many Guardians will argue that out-relief is cheaper than indoor relief, because the applicants will be satisfied with 1s. 6d. out-relief, whereas they would cost 3s. 6d. in the workhouse, regardless of the fact that ten applicants will take out-relief for one who will accept indoor relief. In other words, 15s. will go for out-relief against 3s. 6d. for indoor relief.

"Again, the argument is constantly used that indoor relief is much more disgraceful than out-relief, and the poor would rather die than come into the house. Surely no argument could well be more fallacious. Outdoor relief and indoor relief are equally disgraceful. The one, as fully as the other, implies an admission on the part of the applicant that his means are unequal to his necessities, and that he is therefore obliged to become a burden upon the ratepayers for his support. This entails, as a necessary consequence for the pro-

tection of society, a most thorough and minute inquiry into all his private affairs and those of the individuals who are legally liable for his support. The pauper who accepts indoor relief allows the extent of his necessity to be submitted to a complete test, and he gives the best work of which he may be capable in return for the relief afforded to him. The outdoor pauper, in practice, submits to no adequate test of destitution, and gives nothing whatever in return for the burden he places upon the rates. Surely, as a question of disgrace, the man who submits to the workhouse test, and who gives all he can give in return for what he obtains, is far away in a more honourable position than the man who submits to no adequate test, who takes all he can get from the rates, and who gives nothing whatever in return. It is undeniable that an enormous amount of fraud is practised to obtain outdoor relief, and that there can be little fraud in the grant of indoor relief. . . . It may fairly be assumed that the workhouse inmates represent the tested State pauperism of the country. The outdoor relief, on the other hand, includes an unascertained, and almost unascertainable, amount of imposition. . . . There is the further argument that out-relief must be given to prevent the breaking-up of the 'happy little homes' of the poor. What relief, however, is given with this object? Too often 1s. or 1s. 6d. and a loaf. And to what homes is this given? Too often to homes where there is known to be habitual drunkenness, where there are illegitimate children, where prostitution (veiled or unveiled) is carried on, where there is overcrowding, where the house is in an unsanitary condition, and in endless other cases where it would be infinitely better both for pauper and ratepayer that the home should be broken up. It is evident that where homes are kept together by the miserable amounts frequently given as relief, either there must be imposition as to the means of the applicants, or it would be very much better that the paupers should go into the house, where their necessities would be wholly provided for. . . . The hardship of breaking up the very few homes which it might otherwise be desirable to maintain would be very much less than the evil of making the thrifty help to maintain the homes of the unthrifty. Moreover, the support of such homes as might with advantage be maintained is essentially within the province of charity rather than of poor relief. . . . As to the statement that applicants

would rather die than go into the workhouse, and that their independent spirit should be commended for such a determination, it may be questioned whether such independence of spirit is in truth deserving of the smallest encouragement. The objection on their part is, not to become a burden upon their fellow-creatures, but to the receipt of relief in a form which is unacceptable to themselves. The individuals who are too independent to go into the workhouse are perfectly willing to burden the ratepayers with as much out-relief as they can succeed in obtaining from the Guardians. No admiration can be too great for the real independence of spirit which prefers to suffer any extremity rather than admit defeat in the battle of life, or consent to become a burden upon others; but this real independence has no place in the class of case now under consideration. . . . The remarks I venture to place before the Board on the all-important subject of relief to the poor may be unpopular, and may be mis-called harsh and unfeeling, but all who really understand the problem which Guardians are called upon to solve, will admit that the evils and degradation of pauperism cannot be cured by the fatal policy of doing what is most pleasant and most consonant with the gentler feelings of our nature. It is necessary to look to the effects of administration rather than to the pleasure of giving. Guardians are not the trustees of a benevolent fund. They are the administrators of rates compulsorily levied, and which press most hardly upon those who are often sadly worse off than the paupers to whose support they have to contribute. Whether pleasant or not, the fact remains that the free distribution of out-relief removes the greatest inducement to thrift and independence, and compels the thrifty and independent to provide for those who wilfully fail to provide for themselves."

We will give another quotation, in confirmation of previous and oft-repeated truths, from the Report of Mr. Peel, Inspector :—"The Poor Law was not devised to check the flow of private charity, and were a strict and uniform administration of it adopted throughout the country, it would, I feel confident, result in discouraging pauperism and imposture, and lead to the relief of the thrifty, honest, and deserving, from other quarters."

Mr. Bircham, Inspector of the South Wales District, gives the following remarkable statement :—"The outdoor pauperism

in most of the Unions is, in my opinion, still excessive, and might, I think, in time be considerably reduced, were a proper use made of the test of indoor relief. It represents at present nearly 3 per cent. of the total population ; whilst the amount spent in the year on out-relief alone represents the interest of 4 per cent. on a capital of $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions."

The total number of paupers in receipt of relief on January 1st, 1888, in 647 Unions and parishes in England and Wales was 831,505, of which total there were 206,286 *indoor*, and 625,219 *outdoor*. This amounted to one out of every thirty-four persons, or 2·9 per cent. of the population.

It may be interesting to observe that the county which contained the largest number of paupers was Dorset, in which no less than 47·4 out of every 1,000 of the population were in receipt of relief, and no less than 41·2 out of every 1,000 receiving *outdoor* relief. In the Metropolis the proportion was 13·4 per 1,000 of outdoor, and Lancashire the next lowest ; the total for the Metropolis being 27·8, and for the latter 20·2.

Notwithstanding these still high figures, it is satisfactory to note that the returns for the year 1888 were lower than in any other year since 1885, and the diminution is owing to a decrease in the outdoor paupers. In 1849 the number of such was 55 per 1,000, but had fallen to 21·5 per 1,000 in 1888 ; while indoor paupers had decreased only from 7·7 per 1,000 to 6·8 per 1,000 in that time—a great decrease having taken place in the able-bodied class.

In nearly all the reports of the Local Government Board Inspectors there are remarks of satisfaction at the diminution of outdoor relief ; but there is an exception, when Mr. Murray Browne "regrets to say that the profuse out-relief which characterises the greater number of the North Wales Unions still continues." In South Wales, also, the Inspector remarks that "the outdoor pauperism is still excessive." In only three counties is the expenditure on out-relief less than on in-relief. The variation in amount is as follows :—The highest expenditure on out-relief being 83·6 in Wales, and the lowest 23·4 in the Metropolis, the nine intervening divisions graduating between the two extremes, that next to the lowest being, however, 50·9 per cent. Notwithstanding the many improvements made in the treatment of indoor paupers, it is satisfactory to

observe that the expenditure per head has been less in 1887 than in any of the preceding twenty-five years.

Though not exactly bearing upon the question of out-relief, yet as our object is to enlighten the generally prevailing indifference as to Poor Law management, we may add, what may be a surprise to many, that out of the whole cost of over eight millions (exceeded by nearly £200,000) for relief, that portion spent upon the army of officials which is employed to carry out our machinery, amounts to no less a sum than £1,313,425.

We have given examples of the opinions of some of the officers of the Local Government Board on the question of out-relief, as their wide experience must have the greatest weight in its consideration ; but we will add a few extracts from the reports of the Provincial Conferences during the year 1886, as they may be taken to represent the opinions of those who are concerned in carrying out the Poor Law in the different Unions. The following is from a paper by Mr. Bowen Jones, read at the West Midland Conference :—" In 1834 the new Poor Law was passed, the principle of which was to abolish, as far as possible, outdoor relief. How has this statute been administered? Until quite recently, as a general rule, in a most perfunctory manner. Indiscriminate payment of out-relief has been the rule ; and this system, instead of encouraging thrift, has created a premium on improvidence. What incentive existed to exercise the virtue of self-denial on the part of one man, when his frugality would debar him from the benefits received by the reckless, the idle, and extravagant? And what has been the effect of this system of administration as regards the ratepayers? A few years of newborn zeal under the new Poor Law reduced the cost of poor relief very considerably ; but then a change took place, for in 1840 the cost was 5s. 9d. per head of population, while in 1884 it had risen to 6s. 6d. per head. . . . The shortcomings of 100 years, by which the labouring population were taught to regard the Poor Law Union as a refuge to fly to in case of sickness, or for a pension in old age, cannot be eradicated in a day."

At the Conference held in the Northern District in 1886 a paper was read by Mr. Hodgson, Clerk to the Guardians, Sunderland, in which he said :—" The Poor Law must relieve destitution, and that adequately. . . . It is not an auxiliary

existing to eke out insufficient earnings. It cannot supplement the income of the wage-earning classes. . . . Absolute destitution, then, falls within the immediate and specific operation of Poor Law relief."

At the Conference of the South-Eastern District a paper was read on the administration of out-relief by the Chairman of the St. Neots Union, in which he said :—"The most mischievous of all outdoor relief is permanent relief, or the pension granted to old and infirm persons for life—a style of relief still very common in some Unions ; relief given in cases that excite the compassion and pity of Guardians. . . . Every pension granted to an old and infirm person, no longer able to work, is an advertisement encouraging improvidence and unthrift. You foster the idea in the young that they need make no provision for the future ; that, however reckless and improvident they may be, when they are no longer able to maintain themselves, there will be the outdoor relief that will keep them for the rest of their lives. . . . As you can never get to the sources and amount of a pauper's income, so you never probe the capability of friends to help until you offer the house instead of out-relief ; by giving out-relief you stop the flow of that sympathy and willingness to help which it is so important to encourage. . . . We must remember that, with few exceptions, destitution is the consequence of improvidence. It arises, in most cases, from the notion—fostered by the old Poor Law, and kept up by the outdoor relief administered under the present law—that the labouring class are to be helped and provided for, no matter how reckless and improvident they may be. . . . I have only to add one remark—that is, upon the want of uniformity of action amongst Unions in the administration of relief. In one Union out-relief is given in almost every case where want is proved ; in another the application in every removable case is met by an offer of the house. This uniformity cannot be obtained unless certain rules be adopted as the basis. . . . Nothing tends to breed discontent so much as want of uniformity. . . . I am quite sure that the more out-relief is restricted, the more the spirit of self-reliance is increased ; and the spirit of pauperism, the parent of recklessness and improvidence, is crushed." The following resolution was then adopted by the Conference :—"That outdoor relief, being the chief cause of pauperism,

should receive the urgent attention of Guardians, with the object of reducing it to a minimum."

At the same Conference Mr. Fleming, Poor Law Inspector (whose opinions have been already quoted), read a paper on the same subject, in which he said, "No more sad result has followed the evil administration of the Poor Law than the almost utter obliteration of the obligations of the family tie among a very large section of the working classes. The obligation upon the members of a family for their mutual support, instead of being regarded as a duty and a privilege, is looked upon as a burden and a hardship, which may, without disgrace, be shifted on to the ratepayers. . . . Outdoor relief would very soon be discontinued if Poor Law administrators once realised how completely it works in favour of the improvident and unworthy, at the cost of the thrifty and worthy members of society."

In reviewing the different methods of relief in the various countries of Europe, it cannot fail to have been observed that nothing analogous to our relief of the able-bodied exists, as far as workhouses are concerned. Various institutions provide assistance for nearly every form of misery and distress, but on wholly different lines; nowhere is there to be found the right to enter an asylum at any age, and on the mere plea of destitution, together with the freedom and liberty of discharge. Believing that this freedom of relief is the greatest blot and disadvantage of our Poor Law system, we cannot but add a few remarks on this prevalence of free relief to the classes who are beginning to be known as "ins and outs." It was hoped that the various representations which were made before the House of Lord's Committee of 1888 would have resulted in some recommendation for greater stringency as regards this class, but we regret to find that this was not the case. We cannot but express a wish that those who make our laws should have the opportunity of seeing the working of them in practice as well as in theory. If those who have expressed the opinion that further restriction is not necessary nor desirable as regards this class, could take the place of some of our masters of workhouses for a short period, or could even attend the Committees of Guardians when the cases of these persons are considered, we venture to think that the question of "the liberty of the subject" would not be so often urged against any

alteration of the law, which at present allows such freedom of relief to the undeserving, provided by the thrifty and the hard-working.

The liberty to come and go, to take their discharge with the smallest possible restrictions, is the great attraction of the idle and profligate classes to become inmates of our workhouses. To such the "test" becomes no deterrent; it is at their choice to come and go as it suits their own convenience—in fact, the workhouse is an ever-ready, open hotel, and if for good reasons they are refused a day's outing they retaliate by taking their discharge, thus multiplying the trouble of the officers; and if they happen to have children at the schools, they have to be fetched, in order that they may accompany their unnatural parents, too probably to scenes and haunts of vice. Indeed, where the children are concerned, the freedom of discharge is fraught with even greater and untold evils.

It is no question of those who are able and seeking for work, nor of the more permanent aged or afflicted inmates, for whom some considerations of liberty may be demanded. The cases of all such are easily discriminated, and can be dealt with accordingly. We speak of the idle, the profligate, and habitual "ins and outs," who thus abuse the relief offered by the State, and who, even if possessed of means and pensions sufficient to keep them in comfort out of doors, prefer to spend a few days in wild extravagance and then return to the workhouse as destitute. In accordance with our previous plan, we will proceed to give the opinions of some of those who are most able to judge in this important matter.

Mr. Hedley, Local Government Inspector of the Metropolitan District, said, in giving evidence before the Lords Committee, "he would make it an indispensable condition of the acceptance of indoor relief that the person relieved should not be able to discharge himself under a week. . . . He did not see that it would be any hardship, and he would make it apply to all classes of the poor." "The facility with which undeserving paupers can now go in and out of the workhouse is an abuse which ought to be remedied."

Even far more restriction than this of the present liberty is desired by many competent judges of the system and its evils,

by which a pauper can ensure a holiday every fourth day, if he so chooses.

General Lynedoch Gardiner, fifteen years vice-chairman of the St. Marylebone Board of Guardians, writes thus :—" A gang of able-bodied men and women, generally fifty in number, give notice every Friday that they will take their discharge on Monday. On that morning they go out, and return, as a rule, on Tuesday afternoon, many of them drowsy with drink. Sunday being a *dies non* as to work, they thus escape work three days consecutively out of the seven. . . . Some years ago the workhouse at Poplar was used by the Marylebone Guardians for able-bodied persons. In 1877 the master said that inmates were in the habit of taking their discharge from Poplar and applying for relief at Marylebone the same day, the object being to avoid the labour and discipline of the house. They walked from Poplar to the Marylebone relieving officer, and asked for an order of admission. One pauper was discharged and re-admitted twenty-three times in ten weeks."

Let us add what the experienced master of that workhouse says on this matter :—

" The frequency with which a large number of able-bodied men still continue to leave the house for their weekly holiday shows, as I have pointed out on former occasions, the necessity for increased powers of detention for dealing with this class. One hundred and fifty-seven returned from leave of absence drunk and disorderly, in most cases on the evening of the day on which they left the house; the charges for disorderly conduct at the gate increased in number, and were twenty-two. Two women have been in prison four times in the year for this."

A relieving officer of large experience in London writes :—" The number that went out and returned the same day in my district from March 1st to June 1st is 1,482 ; these were cases sent into our own houses. There should be some method or law so that those who are continually going out should be detained for at least a month or more."

At a meeting of the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians the question was raised respecting the punishment of inmates returning drunk to the workhouse after their weekly outing. Out of some 400 allowed to go out, more than half returned in a condition of drunkenness.

We cannot help asking if a weekly holiday is a necessity for such persons as these, maintained at the expense of thrifty ratepayers? They are not merely individuals who thus use the workhouse as a convenient lodging-house, but whole families do the same, taking their discharge with regularity once a week, spending the day in begging in the most likely places, enjoying themselves on the proceeds, and returning at night to the shelter of the house.

“‘Ins and outs’ of all sorts are agents of demoralisation, and nothing else, in a workhouse,” writes one who has practical experience of this fact.

Men or women demanding their discharge take their children with them, these having to be fetched from one or more of the country schools by officers of the workhouse. One such child was taken thus eleven times in a year, being kept out for longer or shorter periods in scenes of vice by her profligate mother, and then returned to her companions at school. In one workhouse for able-bodied men there were in one fortnight forty-two discharges out of sixty inmates.

“A pauper will enter the house, and at the same time give notice of his discharge, which course would prevent his children being sent away to the school. The case was cited of a woman who had discharged herself forty times in a year, in order to evade the attempts of the Guardians to send her child to school.” The Chairman of this Board remarked that “some decision should be come to, not merely affecting the parents of children, but others who made it a practice to run in and out of the house.”

At the North Wales District Conference held in 1886 Mr. Murray Browne, Poor Law Inspector, read a paper on the subject of “Increased Powers of Detention and Treatment of Certain Cases in Workhouses,” in which he urged its importance as regards inmates of bad character, *especially women* and children. And, surely, we may add, of *Imbeciles* also.

It is difficult to define the line of distinction between these classes and those who apply as casuals for a still shorter period of admission; but we cannot help remarking that great ignorance prevails in the public mind concerning this class, as has been recently shown in London by discussions on the unemployed, and the suggestions made on the subject. Again,

we are not aware that other countries provide similar relief for such persons.*

A visit to these wards, and an inspection of the inmates, would help to dispel many theories and delusions with regard to their being mainly refuges for honest persons out of work. Truth compels us to state that the most abandoned, and apparently hopeless, portion are the women, and, we may add, the most sad also, as they are often accompanied by children, and sometimes the whole family of six enter with the mother at all hours of the night and morning. A large proportion are said (in some Unions, at least) to be the worse for drink on admission. Their behaviour and language can be better imagined than described; the Superintendent being called up for each arrival, her task is no light or easy one; the vilest names are applied to her, and she is sometimes told by those who well understand the whole meaning and working of the Poor Law that she is only there because of them, and thus owes her post and her living to their existence (which is true enough)—another instance of what has often been remarked as to the pernicious influence of this claim of right to relief, and the fostering of feelings and conduct which would not be ventured upon where the help is granted as a boon. Many of these casuals are known to procure tickets in one part of London early in the evening, and then wander about (remaining in public-houses as long as they are open) till the early hours of the morning; thus the privileges of admission provided for those in real need and exceptional difficulties are habitually abused by the vagrant and vicious of the lowest classes.

We do not deny that some who need or deserve the relief are to be found amongst the applicants; our object is now to mark the contrast and distinction between our methods and those of other countries, which it cannot but be useful to consider at a time when various theories and suggestions of change are being, and about to be, made on all these questions, especially as regards the casual wards. Signs of increasing interest in all these serious social questions are to be found; and could more frequent opportunities of discussion

* In six months of the year 1887, 38,415 casuals were admitted, and of this number 544 were charged at police courts.

between various Boards of Guardians be promoted, the best results might ensue, for experience would throw light on many dark and puzzling questions.

The growing importance of thrift and providence was never more deeply felt than at the present time ; and this fact forms a significant consideration in connection with Poor Law relief, and especially as regards a laxity in bestowing it on outdoor paupers, the results of which it has been endeavoured to show by the facts and opinions given in these pages.

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